

**SOURCES OF POWER AND
CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES
OF SUPERVISORS**

**SOURCES OF POWER AND
CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES OF SUPERVISORS**

by

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ABSTRACT

TITLE: Sources of power and conflict handling styles of supervisors

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In order to fill the gap in existing research on the topic, this study was undertaken to establish whether a relationship exists between five sources of power and five conflict handling styles.

A theoretical study regarding the concepts of power and conflict was undertaken. In the empirical study these variables were measured using the Power Base Index and Thomas-Kilmann Conflict MODE questionnaires. Reward power was significantly related to the competing and avoiding conflict handling styles; expert power was significantly related to the compromising style; and legitimate power was significantly related to the collaborating conflict handling style.

The research contributes towards a better understanding of power and conflict in organisations and in supervisors' day-to-day management. However, the results indicate the importance of wider, more sophisticated research.

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CHAPTER 1

MOTIVATION AND OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In the last decade South Africa has experienced major changes, in particular in the political sphere where the balance of power has shifted from a minority government to a "people's" government. Now everybody has the right to publically voice their opinions - to agree or to disagree.

This transformation process brought with it a tremendous amount of uncertainty and resistance but also a sense of optimism and great expectations.

At the forefront of the transformation process are the political, business and community leaders who have the added pressures of *adapting* and *leading*. They have to adapt to new challenges, values and expectations of society whilst simultaneously leading society to adapt to these new challenges, values and expectations. These two factors in themselves pose tremendous potential for conflict.

Although change and adapting to change is an everyday occurrence it is contended that the changes of the last decade have been significant as the value systems of many individuals have been challenged and changed.

However, these changes have not only occurred in the political arena. From a systemic perspective one could argue that these global changes also affect organisations significantly. Concepts such as democratisation, empowerment,

participative and change management have become the business cliché's of our time. Managers now face the challenge of transforming organisations to suit continuously changing environmental demands. This transformation process is complex and multi-faceted and will, *inter alia*, include the following aspects:

- Changing managers *beliefs* concerning workers, i.e. workers should no longer be seen as being inherently lazy, with no ambition or concern for the organisation's goals. Rather, they should be seen as unique individuals, with unique abilities and desires, with a unique contribution to make towards organisational goals, and a need for progress and effectiveness.
- Evaluating and changing *management styles*, viz, moving away from the mechanistic management styles toward more humanist cultural management styles, i.e. managing diversity and respecting differences (Verwey, 1994).
- Changing bureaucratic organisation *structures* to flatter structures, that will encourage involvement and improve communication between supervisors and subordinates.
- Changing the way in which *conflict* is handled - creating a balance between having a concern for production and having a concern for others' viewpoints, needs and contributions. Thereby encouraging the use of collaboration and problem solving techniques. In coherence with the changing of conflict handling styles, beliefs about the destructive nature of conflict should be adapted. The constructive handling of conflict could stimulate creativity, transparency and thereby foster trust.
- Changing the *power* relationships between organisational members. Individuals at the lower levels of organisations need to be empowered to make decisions concerning all the aspects of their work that affect them directly.

The changes mentioned above are only a few of the various changes that have been advocated and also constituted part of literature on management for decades. Some organisations have implemented them very successfully whereas others, particularly the larger more bureaucratic organisations, have failed to do so.

This study is concerned with two variables central to the transformation processes and to the supervisor-subordinate relationship, viz, *sources of power* and *conflict handling styles*.

1.2 RESEARCH ON SOURCES OF POWER AND CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES

According to Fairholm (1993) conflict is the result of asymmetries of power, values or status. Rummel (1991) contends that these asymmetries lead to conflict resolution which in turn is the balancing of individual interests, capabilities, and wills. However, according to Folger and Poole (1984), if these *imbalances in power* are too significant, a serious threat is posed to constructive conflict resolution.

In addition to conflict being used to resolve imbalances in power, the correct use of power can facilitate constructive conflict handling and concurrently reduce conflict (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986). On the other hand, excessive use of power, as perceived by a less powerful group, may cause an increase in conflict.

It is clear from the literature that power not only causes conflict but is also used in the resolution of conflict (Fairholm, 1993). Although this might be true, little research has been done to investigate the relationship between the constructs *sources of power* and *styles for handling interpersonal conflict* (Rahim & Buntzman, 1988, p.195). Most researchers have studied the constructs separately or focused on the causal relationship between the broader concepts of power and conflict (*not* the sources and the styles) (Lusch, 1976, p.382; Michener, Lawler & Bacharach, 1973, p.155; Richmond, Wagner & McCroskey, 1983, p.34; Twomey, 1978, p.144).

Due to the importance of power and conflict in organisations and the shortage of research in this area, the relationship between sources of power and conflict handling styles are investigated in this study.

1.3 DESCRIPTION OF VARIABLES

1.3.1 Conflict handling styles

Five styles for handling interpersonal conflict are investigated in this study. These styles are differentiated on two basic dimensions: *assertiveness*, and *cooperativeness*. The first dimension explains the degree to which a person wants to satisfy his own concerns. The second dimension explains the degree to which a person wants to satisfy the concerns of others. The five styles are the following:

- *Competing* - This style is associated with a high assertiveness (concern to satisfy own needs) and low cooperation (concern to satisfy other's needs) (Rahim, 1986). This style has been associated with a win-lose orientation.
- *Avoiding* - Supervisors using this style prefer not to engage in conflict. They display a low level of assertiveness and low cooperation. This style has been associated with withdrawing, buckpassing or sidestepping situations (Ruble & Schneer, 1994).
- *Compromising* refers to intermediate concern for self and others (Donohue & Kolt, 1992). This style is associated with a "give and take" , or "half a bread is better than no bread" situation. This involves sharing, where both parties sacrifice something to reach a mutually acceptable decision (Kozan, 1991).

- *Accommodating* - This style is associated with a high concern to satisfy other's needs and suppress own needs in order to preserve the relationship (Rahim, 1986). This is associated with an attempt to play down the differences and to emphasize the commonalities.
- *Collaborating* - In this style, conflicting parties engage in a problem solving exercise. This involves openness, exchange of information and examination of differences to reach an effective solution acceptable to both parties (Ruble & Schneer, 1994). This is often referred to as a win-win style.

1.3.2 Sources of power

The initial sources of power as identified by French and Raven (1980), underpin the study on sources of power. These sources are:

- *Coercive power* is based on subordinates' perception that a supervisor has the ability to punish them if they fail to conform to his/her influence attempts.
- *Reward power* is based on the perception of subordinates that a supervisor can reward them for desired behaviour.
- *Legitimate power* is based on the belief of subordinates that a supervisor has the right to prescribe and control their behaviour.
- *Expert power* is based on subordinates' belief that a supervisor has job experience and special knowledge or expertise in a given area.
- *Referent power* is based on subordinates desire to identify or "be like" the supervisor because of their admiration of him/her.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Primary objective

The primary objective of the study is to investigate whether a significant relationship exists between the sources of power and the conflict handling styles of supervisors.

1.4.2 Theoretical objective

The theoretical objective comprises of a literature review of the concepts *power* and *conflict*, with specific reference to the sources of power and interpersonal conflict handling styles respectively.

1.4.3 Empirical objectives

- Firstly, to measure the *interpersonal conflict* handling styles of supervisors by means of the Thomas-Kilmann MODE instrument.
- Secondly, to measure the *sources of power* of supervisors through application of an adapted version of the French and Raven instrument (Templer, 1980).
- Thirdly, to determine the possible *relations* between the sources of power and conflict handling styles.

1.4.4 Research question

In terms of the objectives of the study the following research question is presented:

"Is there a significant relationship between the sources of power and conflict handling styles of supervisors?"

1.5 IMPORTANCE AND VALUE OF THE STUDY

No research in South Africa has been done to determine the relationship between sources of power and conflict handling styles, even though these concepts are fundamental to effective management in organisations. This study is aimed at providing the theoretical background and empirical conclusions necessary to address these disparities.

An understanding of these concepts could prove useful to supervisors and subordinates in their day-to-day interaction with one another. Only through an awareness of one's behaviour and the impact of this behaviour on the perceptions, satisfaction and productivity of others, can one attempt to improve one's behaviour.

A study on the relationship between sources of power and conflict handling styles could furthermore provide useful information in terms of understanding whether a supervisor deals with conflict in a specific way in accordance with certain source(s) of power. If this is the case one could argue that by changing a supervisor's sources of power, one could affect his conflict handling styles.

1.6 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The dissertation consists of six chapters.

The *first chapter* dealt with the motivation and purpose of the study.

In *chapter two* a broad overview of conflict is given. Specific reference is made to the dependent variable, conflict handling styles.

In *chapter three* the concept of power is outlined. Specific reference is made to the independent variable, sources of power, as well as research on conflict and power.

In *chapter four* the research methodology is discussed.

In *chapter five* the results of the study and a number of recommendations are given.

A summary of the study follows in *chapter six*.

CHAPTER 2

CONFLICT

Have you learned lessons only of those who admired you, and were tender with you, and stood aside for you? Have you not learned great lessons from those who braced themselves against you, and disputed the passage with you?

(Whiteman in Tjosvold, 1991)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Social conflicts are pervasive, come in many forms, and involve vastly different types of parties, ranging from individuals to large macro units such as nations. People habitually oppose views, negotiate different agendas, and express frustrations about issues in various ways.

However conflict in itself does not destroy. It is the destructive ways of handling important conflicts that undermine our well-being, confidence, and effectiveness (Van Epps, 1990, p.2)

In a world where everything is classified as being either black or white, conflict is classified as a black phenomenon, i.e. destructive. In South Africa, suppression and exclusion prevailing for many decades resulted in violence and counter violence as

means of handling differences. It is no wonder then that many still believe that conflict can and will always be destructive. According to Rubin, Pruitt and Hee Kim (1994) there is a limit to the amount of conflict that a society can tolerate, even conflict of the most productive sort.

Destructive conflict is the most complex and harmful phenomenon that individuals and organisations have to deal with. Not only is it a threat to human development and productivity, but also to the survival of the human species. Within organisations, destructive conflict between management and workers, between various functional units, departments and divisions, and workers may lead to low morale, loss in production time and have extensive cost implications for employees and the organisation.

The democratisation of the political sphere and the workplace, provides people with the opportunity to express their needs, viewpoints and differences. This will, in the course of time, eradicate the distrust and the traditional viewpoints about destructive conflict. To achieve this ideal, the unique preferences, distastes and circumstances of every individual should be taken into account in the conflict handling process.

This will lead to a situation where more people will come to terms with and accept the contemporary view of conflict - conflict is neither desirable nor undesirable but *inevitable* (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1990; Ross, 1993; Van Epps, 1990, p.2). The emphasis has shifted from conflict *elimination*, to an emphasis on *positive confrontation* and *management* of conflict.

Conflict may stimulate innovative thinking, raise morale, create trust, improve transparency, lead to an increase in productivity and ultimately ensure the survival and growth of organisations and the country. To achieve this, conflict should be perceived as essential by both management and workers and confronted in a positive manner to find a solution acceptable to all parties (Fisher, 1990).

The aim of this chapter is to provide a theoretical framework of conflict and the management thereof. Different *styles* of conflict handling will be emphasised. In the first instance a *definition of conflict* is given. Secondly, different *perspectives on conflict* are outlined. These include microlevel perspectives, economical perspectives, industrial relations perspectives, negotiations, and third party interventions. Thirdly, various *models of conflict handling* are considered. These models are divided into two broad categories, viz descriptive models and normative models. Fourthly, the *classification* of conflict is discussed. This includes the sources of conflict, the levels on which organisational conflict is analysed and interpersonal conflict handling. The discussion on interpersonal conflict handling emphasises the different handling styles with specific reference to the research done in this regard. Lastly, a brief *summary* of the chapter is provided.

2.2 DEFINITION OF CONFLICT

According to Webster (in Pruitt & Rubin, 1986), conflict initially indicated a "fight" or "skirmish" - that is, a physical confrontation between two parties. This definition was later expanded to include differences of opinions, needs and interests, but the term was so broadly applied that it was in danger of losing its status as a singular concept (Rubin et al., 1994). The main reason for this is that, according to researchers, no singular definition of conflict exists (Van Epps, 1990, p.28).

Albeit no accord regarding a specific definition prevails, there seems to be certain commonalities present in most of the definitions, which will be highlighted during the course of the discussion.

The classical theorists perceived conflict as regrettable and prescribed a structural approach, such as clarification of job descriptions, detailed chains of command, improved selection procedures and thorough training of employees (Van Epps, 1990, p.29). Their stance was therefore that conflict should be suppressed and avoided (Gibson, Ivancevich & Donnelly, 1985; Tjosvold, 1993).

Schneer and Chanin (1987, p.576) define conflict as a natural phenomenon regarding individuals' perceptions, as a process of irreconcilable goals, perceptions, ideas, values and emotions. An important quality of this definition is that conflict is a *natural* occurrence. Maslow (in Mayer, 1990) even described conflict as a sign of health.

A further important feature of the definition of Schneer and Chanin (1987, p.576) is that conflict is viewed as a *process* (Byrnes, 1986, p.47). This coincides with Pondy's 1967-episode model and Thomas'- 1976 process model, which state that conflict goes through certain stages, commencing with the antecedent conditions and ending with the aftermath of conflict (Folger, Poole & Stutman, 1993) (see paragraph 2.4.1a).

A shortcoming of the above definition is that conflict is limited to *differences between people*, i.e. interpersonal conflict. Conflict originating from within individuals, i.e. intrapersonal conflict is not considered. Kroon (1990) augments this disparity by defining conflict as the perceived or experienced irreconcilable differences within an individual or between two or more individuals, which lead to one or other form of opposition.

The definition can further be adjusted by replacing the word *individual* with *system* (the individual is then considered to be a system). This will imply that the definition can be applied to any system(s), that is individuals, cultural groups, organisations, communities and nations.

Kroon's (1990) definition furthermore refers to the possible effects of conflict, namely that it leads to opposition. The word opposition should be replaced with the term *interaction*, for this will then include a number of behavioural responses, ranging from physical attacks to withdrawal (Folger et al., 1993, Rahim, 1986). Interaction therefore implies both covert and overt behaviour (De Moor, 1989; Robbins, 1974).

As mentioned earlier, it is clear from the above definitions that a number of essential elements should be accounted for in a definition of conflict. The most important of these are that conflict:

- is a *natural* phenomenon,
- is a *process*,
- implies *differences*,
- can occur *within* or *between* systems,
- leads to one or other form of overt or covert *interaction*.

Taking the above essential elements into consideration, conflict is defined as:

"a natural process of interaction within or between systems concerning perceived or real irreconcilable differences which lead to certain behavioural responses."

As pointed out previously, the multifaceted nature of conflict led to the development of different perspectives on conflict. Hence a discussion of these varying perspectives.

2.3 PERSPECTIVES ON CONFLICT

The construct conflict has been researched and studied from a variety of theoretical disciplines and frameworks, ranging between the fields of anthropology, psychology, sociology, philosophy and political science (Sheppard, 1992, p.325).

Lewicki, Weiss and Lewin (1992, p.209) reported that the study of conflict within organisations has received selective attention from researchers for a number of years, but has gained momentum within recent discussions and research. This may be ascribed to the fact that conflict is no longer merely considered as destructive (Rubin et al., 1994).

This new perspective on conflict led to the insistence on alternative, more effective ways of dealing with conflict by community and business leaders. According to Pondy (1992, p.257) the outmoded attitude towards conflict was suitable for the time within which it was developed, but had to change in accordance to a vast changing environment.

Given the eclectic history of conflict research, at least five main approaches on the understanding of conflict can be identified. Each of these can be subdivided into various theories and models (Lewicki et al., 1992, p.210). The five main perspectives are:

- Microlevel or psychological
- Economical
- Industrial relations
- Negotiations
- Third party interventions

2.3.1 Micro level or psychological perspectives

This perspective focuses on intrapersonal-, interpersonal- and small group behavioural variables, which elicit conflict and influence its dynamics and outcome.

Sheppard (1992, p.326) refers to the micro level as the intermediate or *relationship level* of analysis and states that this is the most difficult level to define and analyse.

One of the earliest contributors to the study of conflict on this level was Sigmund Freud, with his *psychodynamic perspective* (Folger et al., 1993). The basic model has three components: the id, which serves as the source of energy; the superego, the value system designed to constrain this energy and; the ego, the executive function that relates the id and superego to actual behaviour.

The frustrations and uncertainties involved in conflict generate two powerful impulses that the ego must manage - the aggressive impulse and anxiety (Maddi, 1989). The most important contribution of this perspective is its explanation of the role of impulses, particularly aggression and anxiety, in conflict. The idea that impulses build up and can be redirected into other activities, including attacks on another person, is central to most conflict theories.

Another psychological perspective on intrapersonal conflict behaviour was the *stimulus-response* theory presented by Dollard and Miller (in Hall & Lindzey, 1985). According to them, severe conflict often underlies the neurotic person's symptoms and prevents the person from making the responses that would normally reduce such conflicts. Five basic assumptions about conflict behaviour underlie this perspective:

- A person's tendency to approach a positive outcome becomes increasingly stronger the closer the person comes to the outcome.
- The tendency to avoid a negative stimulus also becomes increasingly stronger as the person nears that stimuli. Therefore, a person who views conflict as negative and who is then confronted by a conflict situation will tend to show distinct avoidance behaviour.
- The rate at which avoidance tendencies increase, as a person nears a negative stimuli, is greater than the rate at which approach tendencies increase as the person nears a positive stimuli.
- Increased motivation will cause either the approach or the avoidance tendencies to be stronger at any given distance from the outcome.
- When two responses compete the stronger behaviour will occur.

On the basis of the five assumptions, three types of conflict have been identified: *approach-avoidance* conflict, *approach-approach* conflict, and *avoidance-avoidance* conflict. According to Hall and Lindzey (1985), Dollard and Miller's theory has received substantial attention from particularly personality theorists and an adapted version is even used in negotiation teachings on conflict behaviour (Pienaar & Spoelstra, 1991).

2.3.2 Economical perspectives

These perspectives include the application of economical rationality, individual decision making, and even more complex social behaviour (Lewicki et al., p.210).

One of its most renowned applications is the so called *experimental gaming theory* (Folger et al., 1993). In this theory situations of interdependency between parties are depicted, various actions that can be taken and possible outcomes of each action are given, individual preferences are reflected by a prescribed rational behaviour choice (Varoufakis, 1991) and cost and rewards are assigned according to different conflict behaviour (Folger et al., 1993).

The fundamental assumption of the theory is that people will exercise rational choices when dealing with conflict.

A well-known mixed-motive game, the "Prisoner's dilemma", illustrates this theory. Each of two players make a choice between competing or cooperating in ignorance of the other's choice. The design of the payoff matrix determines that competing while the other cooperates maximises one's own gain, mutual competition incurs small losses, and mutual cooperation yields small gains (Fisher, 1993, p.109). The game indicates that individuals who tend to promote their own interests find it difficult to co-operate with others and hence solve conflict in a constructive manner (Bladock, 1989).

A further assumption of the theory is that in the formulation of an own strategy, conflicting parties will consistently contemplate one another's possible arguments, perceptions and behavioural preferences. For example, should party A be of the opinion that party B would exercise a particular choice, party A will adapt its strategy accordingly. The same would be applicable to party B.

2.3.3 Industrial relations perspectives

According to Dunlop (in Beaumont, 1990) industrial relations is not a science in itself, but has arisen from the multi disciplinary fields of psychology, sociology, economy, political science and legal studies. Various attempts to study industrial relations and establish a universally accepted theoretical base proved unsuccessful in the past. This is mainly due to the variety of value orientations and ideologies innate in industrial relations (Slabbert, 1991).

Three ideologies that focus on the origin, size and situations of conflict within organisations are discussed. These are: *unitary ideology*, *pluralistic ideology* and the *radical ideology*.

a) *Unitary ideology*

This ideology stems from the Human Relations School which emphasises the unity of interests and goals between management and workers (Folger et al., 1993). Loyalty towards the company is expected from all parties.

Management maintains the legitimate prerogative to manage within a unitary structure where their authority is viewed as mundane and thus unquestionable. Conflict behaviour is not tolerated as it is viewed as a *threat* both to the organisation and the community as a whole (Slabbert, 1991).

Organisations following this paternalistic approach can be compared to a sports team which has one designated source of authority, i.e. the captain, and one focus, namely the team. Both management and the workers endeavour to achieve the organisational goals which correspond with personal goals.

It is clear from the above that the focus is on *harmony*. Conflict is thus considered unimportant and unacceptable and generally the result of poor communication and ingratitude (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1990). Any actions which might promote a "us-them" mentality, like collective bargaining and trade unions, are considered destructive for the organisation (Beaumont, 1990).

b) *Ploralistic ideology*

According to Bendix (1989), the ploralistic ideology has its origin in resistance against the political doctrine of sovereignty. This doctrine is based on the presumption that there should always be an authority with final decision making powers in any politically independent system.

From an industrial relations point of view, ploralists view organisations as a coalition of individuals and groups holding their own aspirations satisfiable within the organisation.

Conflict is viewed as unavoidable in such a system and should be welcomed, as it highlights the fact that peoples' aspirations and needs are not suppressed (Douws Dekker, 1990).

The oppression of workers and the imbalance of power between the employer and employee led to the development of trade unions (Webster, 1978). Trade unions fulfil an important role in terms of power symmetry in organisations and has had a dramatic impact on the political and economical spheres in South Africa (Slabbert, 1991).

Management within a pluralistic approach are not allowed to take unilateral decisions. Decisions should be taken in collaboration with employees and their trade unions.

c) *Radical ideology*

The radical approach has its roots in the Marxist frame of reference (Slabbert, 1991). The distinction between capitalists, who own businesses, and those who sell their labour is stressed in this ideology (Bendix, 1989). Labour is thus viewed as a commodity. In addition this ideology stresses the continuous *power struggle* between capitalists and labour.

The role of trade unions is to prevent the exploitation of labourers by joining them in collectivities. Unless capitalists are overturned workers will always be exploited, according to these radicalists.

Conflict is thus the result of the *power struggle* between capitalists and labour.

In summary, these three ideologies refer to individuals and organisations beliefs about conflict, the causes, and the outcomes thereof. However it is contended that many people say they are advocates of the pluralistic approach, but in their day-to-day conflict handling their behaviour suggest otherwise.

2.3.4 Negotiations

This approach stems essentially from the industrial relations perspective and international relations (Lewicki et al., 1992, p.210). Within the South African context it is difficult to separate negotiations from the industrial relations approach as it forms an integral part of the day-to-day interaction between employees and employers, and employers and trade unions.

Pienaar and Spoelstra (1991) define negotiations as a process of interaction between parties, directed at reaching some form of agreement that is based upon common interests, with the purpose of *resolving conflict*.

Hoffman (1992) adds that negotiation is characterised by the following attributes:

- it is an explicit and purposeful incident,
- it is executed by representatives of all parties concerned,
- the process is designed to reconcile differences between parties,
- the outcome is dependent on the perceived relative power relationship between the parties. The relative power of the parties is a function of the their economical and socio-political conditions.

Hoffman (1992) further contends that *power* is critical in negotiations. Negotiating from a source of power is important, as one needs (perceived) power to be effective. From a holistic perspective negotiations can be viewed as a separate perspective to the study of conflict, but from an organisational perspective it forms part of the industrial relations perspective.

2.3.5 Third party interventions

This perspective, as was the case with negotiations, originated from research in industrial relations and emphasises the actions taken by parties outside the conflict situation to resolve the conflict or facilitate effective negotiations (Rubin et al., 1994). Two of the main approaches of third party settling are *mediation* and *arbitration*.

The key characteristic of *mediation* is that the final resolution rests with the parties themselves (Folger et al., 1993). The mediator's role is to facilitate negotiations. No decision making powers are assigned to this role (Bendix, 1989).

To the contrary, *arbitration* involves the appointment of a third party acting as adjudicator in the conflict situation (Rubin et al., 1994). The arbitrator listens to the arguments and counter arguments of both parties whereafter (s)he takes a decision enforceable on both parties. The arbitrator thus takes on the role of the decision maker in a conflict situation.

From an organisational perspective this approach is also considered to form part of the industrial relations approach to conflict handling.

2.3.6 Summary

In summary, the various perspectives on conflict provide a holistic view of the phenomenon within organisations. Although they are inherently different, overlapping and mutual influencing occurs. In the opinion of Bendix (1989), three of the approaches, industrial relations, negotiations and third party intervention, belong to the same paradigm. Although the last two approaches are also relevant to other fields of study, it evolved and expanded within the industrial relations and political spheres in South Africa.

The present study is mainly concerned with the *micro level* perspectives, particularly interpersonal conflict. The study further ascribes to the pluralistic ideology of conflict with due regard to the fact that some of participants (sample) in the study might be advocates of the radical and/or unitary ideologies.

These perspectives led researchers to develop different models explaining conflict.

2.4 MODELS OF CONFLICT HANDLING

The purpose of a model is to portray the reality in a simplified, intelligible manner. Lewicki et al. (1992, p.211) is of the opinion that earlier researchers, especially

social psychologists, were preoccupied with attempts to define conflict and determine the primary causes of conflict.

Organisational conflict models are divided into two main categories, *descriptive* and *normative* models. Descriptive models attempt to describe the dynamics and causes of conflict from an "uninvolved", scientific point of view, the "how" people do what they do (Folger et al., 1993). Normative models follow a prescriptive approach, whilst stressing co-operation (Brown, 1992, p.303). These theories answer the "why" behind relationships (Folger et al., 1993).

2.4.1 Descriptive models of organisational conflict

According to Lewicki et al. (1992, p.214) three important, albeit not always explicit, assumptions underpin the descriptive models:

- *Conflict finds its origin in a variety of potential sources.* However few studies tested this hypothesis empirically or attempted to determine the most descriptive scheme.
- *Conflict follows an unpredictable pattern.* Most descriptions are conceptual and only utilise data for illustrative purposes. Research to date has not concentrated on complete patterns, but on certain aspects which influence conflict such as perceptual biases and distrust.
- *Conflict manifests in various ways which could have both positive and negative effects.* Earlier research solely focused on the destructivity of conflict (Van Epps, 1990, p.2). Rahim (1986) describes the constructivity of conflict in terms of its contribution to productivity. This implies that a certain amount of conflict (exact amount is not scientifically known), contributes towards higher levels of productivity. On the other hand, too much or too little conflict has a negative impact on productivity.

The core of the various descriptive models are delineated in terms of the above assumptions. In the following section examples of descriptive models of conflict will be reviewed.

a) *Pondy's organisational conflict model*

Pondy (1992, p.255) attempted to combine personality and structural variables which might affect conflict processes and outcomes. He dealt with these variables as elements of the conflict episode. He identified five stages of conflict, namely antecedent conditions, latent conflict, perceived conflict which leads to manifested conflict and finally, the aftermath of conflict.

The situation or circumstances preceding (antecedent condition) conflict entails mainly rivalry for scarce resources, the pursuit of autonomy, attempts to avoid interdependency and the deviation of divisional and organisation goals (Folger et al., 1993). According to the *rivalry model*, rivalry is caused by the pursuit of scarce resources and interdependency by various interest groups (e.g. workers and management) who then involve themselves in a strategic negotiations process to manage the differences (Lewicki et al., 1992, p.212).

Secondly, a *bureaucratic model* illustrates conflict developing in terms of organisational "control". These models focus on the use of power and power asymmetry (Bladock, 1989). This type of conflict arises between vertically differentiated groups, such as supervisors and subordinates about aspects such as rules, procedures and leadership.

Lastly, the *systems model* describes conflict in terms of lateral relationships such as those between workers or different subunits. This form of conflict usually occurs during the co-ordination of work activities and task integration. An example to illustrate the systems model in the Coal mining industry is the conflict which exists between the Mining and Engineering departments. The primary responsibility of the

Mining department is to produce coal by means of huge industrial machinery. The machinery is maintained and serviced by the Engineering department on the basis of scheduled maintenance and contingencies occurring. The maintenance period affects production and consequently the performance of the production department. This is a tremendous source of conflict between the two departments resulting in frequent rivalry.

According to this systems model the constructivity and destructivity of conflict can be evaluated in terms of its effect on the *productivity, stability* and *adaptability* (internal and external pressures) of the organisation (Rubin et al., 1994).

In a re-evaluation of his earlier model, Pondy (1992, p.257) asserts that his previous model was suitable for the time for which it was developed - the 1967 era. However he believes that the model has certain weaknesses, for instance no provision was made for the use of *power* or *violence* to handle conflict. Violence, revolution and the use of power might only have occurred between countries, but not in and between organisations.

The assumption that organisations are co-operative, goal oriented systems that experience problems with co-operation due to the occurrence of sporadic conflict, was one of the greatest shortcomings of Pondy's 1968 model (Pondy, 1992, p.259). This assumption coincides with the unitary ideological perspective on conflict.

b) Structural model

This model was developed by Thomas (1976) and illustrates how underlying external conditions shape events by identifying fixed or slow-changing variables which influence conflict behaviour and by specifying the form of that influence.

Pressures which bare upon the behaviour of the parties in conflict include variables such as:

- Behavioural predispositions
- Social pressures
- Interrelationship of risk involved and the degree of conflict of interest
- Rules and procedures

Once identified, the effects of these variables on behaviour can be specified so that changes to the conflict situation can be made.

The second model developed by Thomas (1976) is referred to as the Process Model of conflict.

c) *Process model*

Thomas (1976) postulates that this model focuses on the main events in a dyadic (two-party) conflict episode, which include:

- *Frustration* as it relates to reaching a goal or satisfying a concern.
- *Conceptualisation* occurs when the frustration is dealt with consciously, and involves a thoughtful assessment of the primary concerns of both parties.
- Depending on the parties' conceptualisation of the conflict, certain *behaviours* may ensue as part of an effort to cope with the frustration of unmet goals. Thomas (1976) discusses three components of behaviour: orientation, strategic objectives, and tactics. Reference will only be made to *orientation* as this component forms an integral part of this study. Orientation is the "degree" to which a party desires to satisfy personal concerns, as well as the concerns of the other party (Rubin et al., 1994). This later led to the development of the five styles of handling interpersonal conflict. These styles will be discussed comprehensively later in this chapter (see paragraph 2.5.3).

- *Interaction* refers to the reaction of the second party to the first party's behaviour.

The Structural model and Process model are not mutually exclusive, but are interrelated to such an extent that overlooking either of them would create an incomplete view of conflict.

d) *Other descriptive models*

Various other descriptive models have also been developed. For the purposes of this study the most important of these are those involving conflict handling and conflict handling styles. One of the more prominent models in this area is that of Blake and Mouton (1964), also known as the *managerial grid*. According to this model five conflict handling styles are depicted in two dimensions, namely *assertiveness* (the extent to which parties attempt to satisfy own interests) and *co-operation* (the extent to which a party attempts to satisfy another's interests).

Cosier and Ruble (1981, p.817) postulate that the model is meaningful from a descriptive perspective due to the fact that it focuses on the way in which people perceive conflict.

According to Lewicki et al. (1992, p.213), Blake and Mouton's initial ideas were essentially normative. However, the descriptive part of the model has already sustained various empirical tests (Cosier & Rubble, 1981 and Pruitt & Rubin, 1986).

2.4.2 Normative models

Normative models of conflict aspire to describe conflict processes and the dynamics thereof. These models attempt to change conflict behaviour in order to promote productivity (Lewicki et al., 1992, p.214).

Normative models were developed before descriptive models. Thomas' dual concerns or dyadic model and measuring instrument are regarded the precursors of the normative perspective.

As with descriptive models, various assumptions underpin normative models (Lewicki et al., 1992, p.216):

- *Conflict handling and conflict handling behaviour can change.* This positive perspective on human behaviour corresponds with the humanistic trends in management theory as inspired by Maslow and McGregor (Kroon, 1990). Responses to conflict are thus learnt behaviours and may change in response to previous behaviour, training and behavioural changes (Schultz, 1989, p.309).
- *The emphasis in conflict handling should be on the effects rather than the causes of conflict.* If the causes of conflict are accepted as a given, emphasis should rather be on the responses (effects) of conflict.
- *Joint problem solving is the most suitable way to solve conflict.* Thomas (1976) is of the opinion that a few factors should be considered in the relative economical outcome of conflict, that is the **relative power** among the parties, the quality of the parties' relationship and the extent to which the parties are interdependent on one another. According to him joint problem solving would be the most suitable option in the majority of situations.

Some examples of normative models are:

a) *Conflict grid*

This model was developed by Blake and Mouton (1981, p.439) and refers to a manager's concern about *production* (results) and his/her concern for *people* (extent

to which relations and feelings are conserved). The grid consists of five different management styles:

- 9/1 (high concern for production and low concern for people)
- 1/9 (low concern for production and high concern for people)
- 1/1 (low concern for both production and people)
- 5/5 (average concern for both production and people)
- 9/9 (high concern for both production and people)

The 9/9 management style, where a high concern for both production and people prevails, is considered to be the most suitable management style (Blake & Mouton, 1981, p.439).

The grid was later adapted and refined to include different conflict handling styles on two dimensions. These are discussed more comprehensively later in this chapter (see paragraph 2.5.3).

b) Conflict cycles

Pondy's 1968 model referred to earlier in the chapter focuses on the issue of conflict cycles. According to this model, there are substantive and emotional issues which lead to the manifestation of conflict. This conflict behaviour and consequences induce new issues. According to Pondy (1968, p.298) these conflict cycles are:

- Antecedent conditions
- Latent conflict
- Perceived conflict
- Manifested conflict
- Aftermath of conflict

However this does not imply that every form of conflict goes through all of the above stages. Potential conflict might never be perceived by the parties and if so, it does not always manifest in conflict. Walton (1987) postulates that if latent conflict is not handled, but rather suppressed, it generally leads to other forms of conflict exposed at a later stage.

A second model of conflict cycles is the model of Walton (1987). The formulation of this model is essentially diagnostic in nature, but the use thereof normative (Lewicki et al., 1992, p.216). The main difference between the models is that Walton's model focuses on interpersonal conflict and Pondy's on intra-organisational conflict.

c) System One-to-Four

Likert (in Massie and Douglas, 1981) stressed different responses to conflict within organisations. The hypotheses about the way in which conflict was handled originated from his studies of management styles. Only the two extreme systems, systems one and four will be discussed, as only these are relevant in this study.

System One: Management has no confidence in their workers. All planning and decision making are performed by top management. The supervisor-subordinate relationship is generally the product of fear and distrust. Subordinates are forced to deliver certain outputs through impending the compensation and penalty systems within the organisation (Likert, in Hersey & Blanchard, 1982). Managers will tend to use coercion and force in dealing with conflict.

System Four: Management has full confidence in their workers. Decision making is delegated to the lowest level and is well integrated throughout the organisation. Workers are motivated through participation and involvement in the development of a compensation system, goal setting and the performance appraisal system.

System one managers are thus *task orientated* with autocratic management styles. System four managers, on the other hand, exercise a *relationship oriented* management style, based on team work, mutual trust and participation. Systems two and three resort between these two extreme management styles. System four is considered the most effective within the system one-to-four model.

According to this model the use of *power* has a particular influence on the way interpersonal conflict is handled (Likert, in Hersey & Blanchard, 1982). Within system one management styles, position power is often utilised and personal power rarely utilised. Within the system four management styles the reverse power relationship occurs.

2.4.3 Summary

Taking the above mentioned descriptive and normative models into consideration, the assumption is made that the causes of conflict and the handling of conflict should be analysed separately. Causes and handling of conflict are analysed sequentially rather than cyclical. This means that models on causes of conflict focus on conflict initiation and escalations, whilst models of conflict handling ignore these two factors.

The descriptive models address the causes and dynamics of conflict and the normative models follow a prescriptive approach with the emphasis on co-operation and mutual problem solving.

Although all the above mentioned models contribute to the understanding of the construct conflict, *Thomas' Process* or dyadic model of conflict is of particular relevance for the purposes of this study.

2.5 CLASSIFICATION OF ORGANISATIONAL CONFLICT

Rahim (1986) classifies organisational conflict on the basis of the following:

- the *sources* of conflict
- the *levels* of conflict
- *interpersonal conflict handling*

2.5.1 Sources of conflict

Robbins (1974) states that any person studying and dealing with conflict (thus including all people) should be familiar with the possible sources thereof as this enhances the task of handling conflict.

The sources of conflict refer to the antecedent conditions, that is those conditions that serve to cause or enhance conflict (Rubin et al., 1994). Cognizance of these antecedent conditions will assist individuals in the task of handling the conflict. The antecedent conditions are described in some detail in the following section:

■ *Affective conflict*

This occurs when two interactive systems have incompatible beliefs (Guetzkow in Rahim, 1986). Gibson et al. (1985) stress the extent to which differentiation in terms of personality occurs in complex environments. The greater the extent of differentiation, the greater the probability of conflict.

■ *Conflict of interests*

According to Pruitt and Rubin (1986) the interests of people constitute the core of their thoughts, values and attitudes.

Various dimensions could be applied to describe interests. In the first instance, some interests are universal (for example the need for security, identity and happiness). Secondly, some interests are only relevant to certain groups (for example certain groups' need for a home land). Thirdly, interests may be prioritised in terms of the relative importance thereof for a particular individual.

Pruitt and Rubin (1986) state that these interests should first be converted to *aspirations*, that is **goals** and **standards**. A goal refers to an end condition that is strived towards (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1990). If the aspirations of one party is inconsistent with those of the other party it indicates a conflict of interests.

■ *Conflict of values*

This condition occurs when the values and ideologies of two social entities differ with respect to certain issues. For example, person A and person B's ideology or values might differ with respect to working on Sundays. Massie and Douglas (1981) emphasise one of the main sources of value conflicts, viz the own frame of reference held by each individual. They come from different backgrounds, go to different schools and churches, grow up in different socio-economic conditions and have different friends.

■ *Cognitive conflict*

This occurs when two interactive systems become aware of inconsistent thought processes and perceptions. Cognitive conflict thus involves different deductions being made from the same information by different parties.

■ *Goal conflict*

Goal conflict occurs when two parties do not agree on the desired outcome or end condition (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1990). According to Pruitt and Rubin (1986)

goal conflict is a subsection of the *conflict of interests* (aspirations). However, it is true that goals form an integral part of organisational functioning and effectiveness, and can thus be presented as a separate source of conflict.

Luthans (in Bendix, 1989) identifies the following additional sources of organisational conflict:

- *Competition for scarce resources*

This is also sometimes referred to as a conflict of interest (Rahim, 1986). The scarcity and the importance of the resource determines the level of the potential for conflict. According to Ivancevich and Matteson (1990) limited-resource situations result in a win-lose competition, that can easily result in destructive conflict.

An example within the South African context is the shortage of houses in certain communities - a house is a highly valued but scarce resource. This situation has already led to a number of conflict situations and extreme encounters of violence.

- *Interdependency*

The larger the interdependency between work activities of individuals or subunits, the greater the potential for conflict. Ivancevich and Matteson (1990) distinguish between three distinct types of interdependence:

- * **Pooled** interdependence - no interaction between groups are required because each group performs separately, but the combination of all of the groups determine how successful the organisation is. The conflict potential is therefore relatively low.

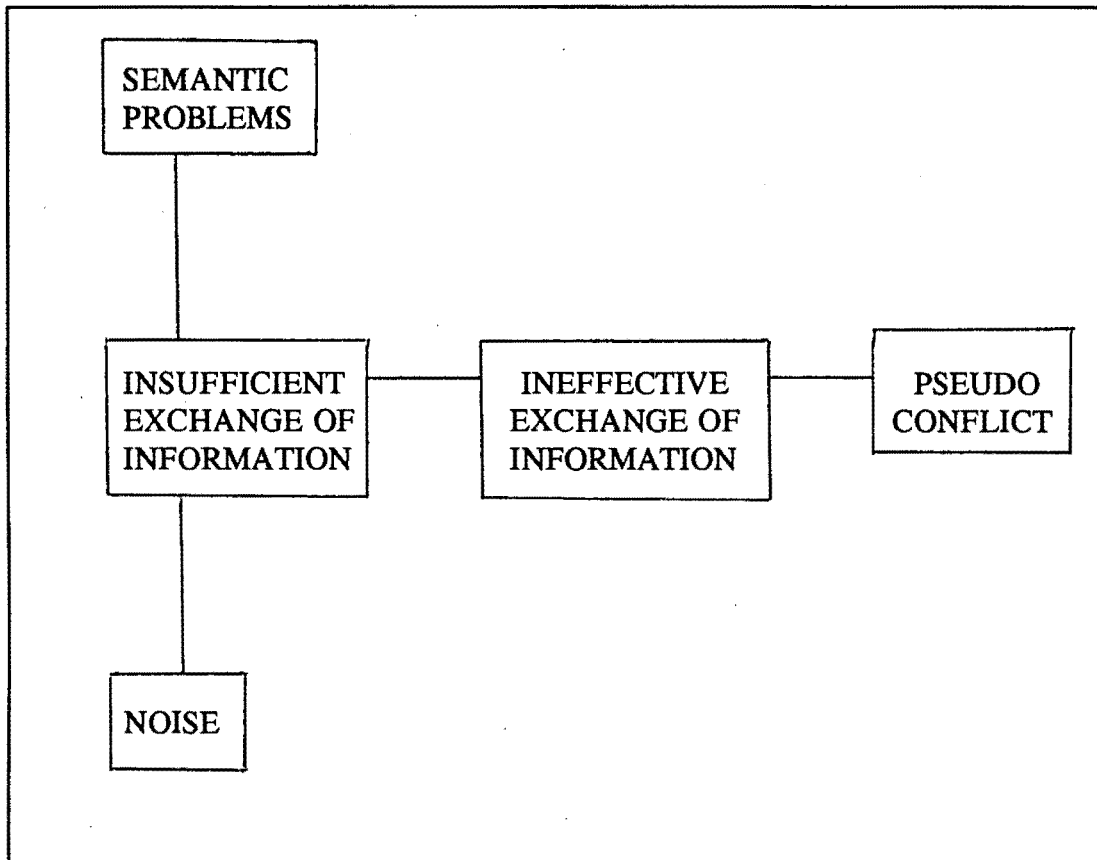
- * **Sequential** interdependence - requires one group or person to complete its task before another group or person can complete its task. The one groups' output serves as another groups' input. Therefore, if the first group in the sequence does not achieve their goals, the potential for conflict is high as this will result in the second group not achieving their goals.
- * **Reciprocal** interdependence - requires the output of each group to serve as input to other groups in the organisation. An example of this is the interdependence among the airport control tower, flight crew, ground operations and the maintenance crew. The potential for conflict is extremely high under these circumstances.

■ *Poor communication*

Effective communication is at the heart of every organisation. According to De Moor (1989) interpersonal conflict is related to communication and communication thus instrumental in every aspect of conflict. Communication, expressed in simple terms, is the transmittal of information between two or more persons by means of verbal and non-verbal symbols (Luthans, 1992). According to Robbins (1974) communication only follows *comprehension*. Rhenman (in Robbins, 1974) refers to conflict following the unsuccessful transmittal of information as "pseudo conflict". From a communications perspective, this is differentiated from conflict based on substantive differences.

Rhenman identified three primary causes of pseudo conflict, illustrated as follows:

FIGURE 2.1
PSEUDO CONFLICT MODEL (Rhenman in Robbins, 1974)



Semantic problems arise due to the inaccessibility to a common language or a lack of proper translation. In the mining industry this poses a serious problem, as up to three different languages are often spoken, i.e. English, Afrikaans and Fanakalo. These languages do not always share corresponding communication symbols.

Insufficient exchange of information refers to the ability of the person to express himself clearly and intelligibly, as well as the ability to receive and process information.

Noise indicates any form of communication distortion which complicates the sending and receiving of information. Many workers in the Mining Industry, particularly

those working underground, are exposed to high levels of noise which could affect communication.

Perfect communication thus occurs when the interpretation of the message received corresponds exactly with the intention of the message sent.

■ *Organisational structure*

Robbins (1974) defines structure as those variables resorting within the manager's ability and responsibility to affect change. Structural conflict refers to those roles and responsibilities within the organisational structure that lead to confusion and uncertainty as well as management's attempts to co-ordinate and separate activities and tasks. An example relating to this is the role of the trade union representative within the formal organisational structure. The extent of these people's responsibility and power are not always clear to line management. Subsequently the potential for conflict is high.

Some structural variables serving as sources of conflict are the following:

- **Bureaucratic qualities** - Specialisation and standardisation are the major factors contributing to bureaucracies. Too much or too little structure within a certain task (leading to role unclarity) may contribute to conflict.
- **Heterogeneity** of the labour force - This is especially relevant to the South African context with its diverse work force. The more heterogeneous the workforce the higher the probability for conflict.
- **Management styles** - Likert (in Hersey & Blanchard, 1982) is of the opinion that "watch over the shoulder" type of supervising creates conflict. He adds that in instances where workers are allowed to set their own goals and plan to achieve those goals, the potential for conflict is restricted.

- Extent of **participation** of lower levels within the organisation. The greater the extent of participation of workers on all levels within the organisation, the smaller the potential for conflict. It may also increase the potential for conflict, but in this case it leads to "creative conflict" (Worchel, Coutant-Sassic & Wrong, 1993, p.78).
- **The use of power** by supervisors. If a supervisor predominantly applies position power, particularly coercion to motivate his/her people, passive aggressiveness or latent conflict may be illicit (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982).

It is clear from the above that the occurrence and utilisation of power may very well be a *cause* of conflict. The question arises whether such use of power has any relation to the way in which conflict is handled. An attempt will be made to answer this question during the course of this study.

The above do not represent all sources of conflict, but it is the most important sources viewed from an organisational conflict perspective. It is furthermore important to note that it should not necessarily be attempted to minimise the occurrence of all forms of conflict. As previously indicated, the occurrence of conflict *per se* is not good or bad, but the handling thereof may be.

The following classification of organisation conflict is organised according to the *levels* on which it occurs:

2.5.2 Levels of organisational conflict

According to Rahim (1986) organisational conflict occurs on four levels.

a) *Intrapersonal conflict*

This level of conflict is often referred to as intra-individual conflict. It often arises when certain tasks, inconsistent with his/her knowledge, interests, goals and values, are expected from an employee. It points to conflict experienced *within* the person himself. For example, some working mothers experience role conflict, because they would prefer to spend the day with their children at home.

b) *Interpersonal conflict*

This cites conflict *between* two or more persons on the same or different hierarchical levels within the organisation.

The differences between people can be substantive in nature (for example differences about goals, structures, policies and practises), or the differences may be personal or emotional in nature (Walton, 1987).

c) *Intragroup conflict*

This points to conflict among members of a group or among subgroups of a larger group. This conflict should be viewed as a function of the different development stages of groups. Ivancevich and Matteson (1990) postulate that groups proceed through four stages of development:

- **Mutual acceptance** - this is the early stage of group formation and at this stage members are not yet willing to express opinions, attitudes and beliefs. Therefore, very little conflict occurs in this stage.
- **Communication and decision making** - members begin to openly communicate with one another. This increase in interaction leads to an

increase in conflict as well. Members try to determine their roles within the group.

- **Motivation and productivity** - the members consume their energy towards the group's goals. Conflict in this stage stimulates creativity and is therefore more constructive than in stage two.
- **Control and organisation** - at this point group affiliation is valued, and members are regulated by group norms. At this stage the group also runs the risk of being too cohesive and conforming, which could lead to efforts to avoid conflict. In addition, efforts to avoid conflict can have negative effects on group processes and productivity. According to Worchel et al. (1993, p.80) avoidance of conflict or "groupthink" is most likely to occur in a cohesive group with a strong leader.

d) *Intergroup conflict*

This refers to conflict between two or more groups within the organisation, for example conflict between line and staff functions (De Moor, 1989).

This is the field of study of social psychologists and several significant theories have been developed in this regard (Fisher, 1993).

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) postulate that intergroup conflict handling behaviour is a function of the *value* of the conflict situation (needs, issues) for the parties and; the importance of the *outcome* to the parties. A further important factor influencing the parties' behaviour is their beliefs about conflict. This is depicted in the following table:

TABLE 2.1
THREE BASIC ATTITUDES TOWARDS INTERGROUP CONFLICT WITH
THE RESULTING BEHAVIOUR (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982)

	Conflict unavoidable, agreement impossible	Conflict avoidable, agreement impossible	Although conflict exists, an agreement can be reached
Outcome very important	Win-lose power struggle	Withdrawal	Problem- solving
Outcome relatively important	Third party intervention	Isolation	Compromise through negotiation
Outcome un- important	Outcome left to own fate	Indifference or ignorance	Smoothing over

The above figure illustrates that if people consider conflict to be *unavoidable* and an *agreement impossible*, behaviour will alternate between passive and active participation. Should the outcome of the conflict be unimportant, behaviour will be passive and people prepared to leave the **outcome to fate** (similar to the flipping of a coin). Should the outcome be relatively important, people will generally prefer **third party intervention** to facilitate the conflict. Lastly, should the outcome be very important, people would behave actively and a power struggle will evolve. This usually leads to a **win-lose** strategy.

People who believe that conflict is *avoidable*, and should it occur it will be *impossible to reach agreement*, will behave **passively** if the outcome is unimportant. Should the outcome be somewhat important, these people will **isolate** themselves from the conflict situation. Should the outcome be very important, these people will find themselves actively involved, but will eventually **withdraw**, as they realise it is impossible to reach an agreement.

People who believe that an *agreement can be reached* although *conflict exists*, will be passive and **smooth over** the problem should the outcome be unimportant. If the outcome is somewhat important, people will become involved in a negotiation process and endeavour to reach a **compromise**. If the outcome is very important, people will become actively involved and have a **problem solving** attitude.

The above model only provides a guideline to predict parties' behaviour in conflict situations in terms of the *importance of the outcome* of the conflict and on the basis of people's *assumptions* about conflict. According to Varoufakis (1991) differing parties are continually contemplating each others' possible arguments, perceptions and behavioural preferences in order to develop an own strategy in the conflict situation.

The level of analysis important for the purpose of this study is the *interpersonal level*, as the conflict relationship between supervisors and subordinates will be investigated.

2.5.3 Interpersonal conflict handling

Conflict handling is increasingly viewed as an integral part of the supervisor's daily task and management style. This constitutes the core of this study, as the way in which conflict is handled determines whether conflict is functional or destructive (Van Epps, 1990, p.2). In this section only methods of handling *interpersonal* conflict is dealt with. It should be noted however, that some of the styles are universally applicable to various levels of conflict, that is intrapersonal -, intergroup - and intragroup conflict.

Ogley (1991) considers conflict handling as an effort by one or more parties, or a third party, to eliminate certain conflicts and prevent frustrations, damage and destructivity.

However, Kroon (1990) maintains that conflict handling does not deal with eliminating conflict. It essentially concerns the *accentuating* of the positive aspects of conflict and the elimination of the negative aspects of conflict.

According to Masterbroek (1993), the way in which a person approaches conflict is a function of that person's belief about conflict. In the first part of this chapter, reference was made to three Industrial Relations approaches to conflict, viz unitary, pluralistic and radical approaches (see paragraph 2.3.3). In the unitary approach, for example, conflict is viewed as being destructive. A supervisor supporting this ideology will probably handle conflict by denying its occurrence and avoiding it altogether.

Scott (1990) is of the opinion that the first step in managing conflict is to defuse the negative emotions prevailing among the parties. Emotional reactions to conflict lead to an increase in emotional "fighting", and irrationality. For this reason Ogley (1991) proposes a "rational intuitive" method of conflict handling. That is, using rational thinking and intuition rather than focusing on the emotional aspects of the conflict situation. It *inter alia* involves consideration of circumstances, personalities, interests and goals of all parties involved (including the self) in the conflict situation. A further important aspect of this method is to define the conflict situation as a "problem". This will enable the parties to use problem solving techniques in managing the conflict.

According to Filley (in Gibson et al., 1985) all methods of conflict handling fall into three broad categories, namely *win-lose*, *lose-lose* and *win-win*.

a) *Win-lose methods*

These methods occur when one of the parties in the conflict situation is dissatisfied with or does not benefit from with the outcome of the conflict (Van Epps, 1990,

p.34). This especially arises in organisations where subordinates do not have the right to participate in decision making. An attitude of "do as I say" prevails.

b) *Lose-Lose methods*

The outcome of such a conflict situation leaves both parties dissatisfied. According to Gibson et al. (1985) it generally entails a compromise by both parties. The presumption is made that half a loaf of bread is better than no bread at all.

c) *Win-Win methods*

These methods differ from the previous ones in that the main focus is on end results. A problem solving approach is followed which leads to a shift in focus from the two individuals involved to the problem causing the conflict.

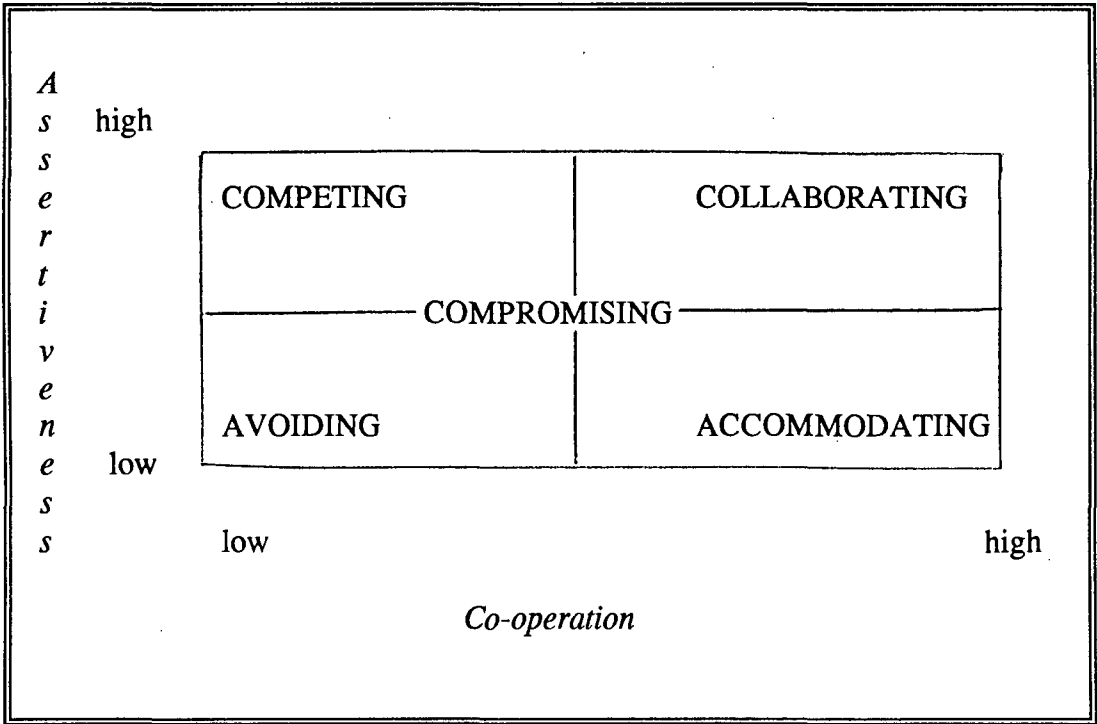
According to the above classification it appears that a win-win approach is the most effective way to handle conflict (Gibson et al., 1985).

Blake and Mouton (1964), in their search to identify leadership behaviour that produces organisational excellence, developed one of the first conceptual classification schemes for conflict handling. The scheme evolved from the human relations movement in the 1940's and 1950's (Folger et al., 1993) and contained five different conflict handling styles: *competing*, *smoothing*, *confronting*, *compromising* and *avoiding* (Van Epps, 1990, p.52).

These styles can be interpreted in terms of orientation toward conflict situations along two dimensions, the manager's concern for people and his/her concern for production. The classification scheme was later expanded by Kilmann and Thomas (1975, p.971) through modification of two of the dimensions.

The premise on which the model is built upon relates to two critical dimensions of behaviour that shape perceptions or the way in which one conceptualises conflict. The first dimension is *cooperativeness* and represents the extent (high or low) to which a person endeavours to satisfy others' concerns and needs, at the expense of personal needs (Rubin et al., 1994). The second dimension is *assertiveness* and represents the person's desire to satisfy personal concerns. Treating these dimensions as independent variables, Thomas (1976) plots five orientations to conflict as presented in the figure below:

FIGURE 2.2
TWO DIMENSIONAL MODEL OF CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES
 (Thomas, 1976)



From this conceptual framework Thomas and Kilmann developed the MODE (management of differences), an instrument to measure interpersonal conflict handling (Kabanoff, 1987, p.160). Hence a discussion of the different conflict handling styles.

■ *Collaborating*

Collaboration, which measures high on both dimensions, involves facing the conflict, bringing all pertinent issues and concerns out into the open, and as a result, reaches creative solutions that integrate the different points of view (Rahim, 1992; Ruble & Schneer, 1994, p.157).

This style has also been known as the "problem solving" or "integrative" style of handling conflict (Folger et al., 1993).

According to Donohue and Kolt (1992) this style requires good communications skills from all parties involved, that is, expressing one's concerns but also listening to the concerns of the other party.

■ *Accommodating*

Accommodating refers to a high concern for others' needs and a low concern for own needs. There is an element of self-sacrifice in this style (Rahim, 1986). It may take the form of submissiveness or obedience to another person's wishes.

"Smoothing", another term used to describe this style, represents overlooking or playing down the existing differences and emphasizing commonalities, and trying to satisfy the other party's wishes.

Individuals using this style would not be likely to bring the conflict out into the open to be discussed, as they would not risk feelings being impaired (Van Epps, 1990, p.31).

■ *Competing*

Competing, also known as the "forcing" or "dominating" style (Folger et al., 1993), results from the production-oriented management styles that Blake and Mouton have identified in their managerial grid. It involves competitive behaviours and the use of *power and authority* to have one's position accepted, even if it means ignoring the other people's concerns (Kozan, 1984, p.787).

Individuals using force perceive conflict as a barrier to goal attainment, which must be handled promptly before it undermines the authority structure and becomes unmanageable (Van Epps, 1990, p.31).

■ *Compromising*

When individuals show some concern for their own needs and some concern for other's needs, they engage in compromising behaviour (Donohue & Kolt, 1992). This style is commonly referred to as "splitting the difference", "give and take" or "horse trading", where both parties give up something in order to find a middle ground (Folger et al., 1993; Kozan, 1991).

According to Rahim (1986) a compromising individual gives up more than a competing but less than an accommodating individual.

■ *Avoiding*

Avoiding is a style reflecting low concern for both the self and the others and takes the form of withdrawal, sidestepping the issue, or shying away from open discussions (Ruble & Schneer, 1994, p.156).

According to Van Epps (1990, p.31) "double talk" is also regarded as a method of avoiding conflict.

The conflict handling styles as discussed above, provide a common vocabulary and most major authors on interpersonal conflict have used the styles extensively (Folger et al., 1993). These styles have proved to be an extremely useful tool for understanding organisational conflict, and especially to determine the **preferred** style of an individual (Ruble & Schneer, 1994, p.157). Sternberg and Soriano (1984, p.115) state that people generally hold a preferred style which they apply in various conflict situations.

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) and DuBose and Pringle (1989, p.10) contend that people are able to adapt and that the situation will determine the best way to handle conflict.

This raises the question whether individuals are able to adapt their preferred style to different circumstances.

A study on preferred styles done by Grace and Harris (1990, p.146) did not confirm the findings of DuBose and Pringle (1989, p.10). DuBose and Pringle argue that the circumstances surrounding a conflict situation will determine the way in which it is resolved. The differences in the findings might be ascribed to the fact that DuBose and Pringle only used 32 respondents in their research, whilst Grace and Harris used 207.

Despite the significance of this issue, little research has been undertaken to determine whether people are able to change a particular style suitable to a specific situation (Sternberg & Dobson, 1987, p.794).

Rummel (1991, p.75) contends that the choice of a conflict handling style will be determined by the *relative power* of the different parties. According to Raven and Kruglanski (in Van Epps, 1990, p.33) conflict resolution is a function of the amount of power at a party's disposal and the *source of power* brought to bear on a

situation. The various sources of power will be discussed comprehensively in the next chapter, as it is the independent variable in this study.

Another factor that influences the choice of a conflict handling style, is *personality*. Several studies have been undertaken in this regard (Baron, 1989, p.281; Chanin & Schneer, 1984, p.863; Jones & Melcher, 1982, p.649; Kilmann & Thomas, 1975, p.971). According to Ruble and Schneer (1994, p.157) conflict handling styles are viewed as relatively stable personal dispositions.

Jones and Melcher (1982, p.649) found that among MBA students the need for affiliation was positively related to expressed preference for the accommodating style, but negatively related to expressed preference for competing.

Kilmann and Thomas (1975, p.971) reported that individuals measuring high on the feeling end of the Jungian thinking-feeling dimension are more likely to use accommodation and competition in resolving conflicts, while those on the introvert end of the introversion-extraversion dimension tend to prefer avoidance and collaboration. These results were later confirmed by Chanin and Schneer (1984) and by Mills, Robey and Smith (1985).

Baron (1989, p.291) did research on Type A and Type B personality's and the relation of these traits to conflict handling. The results indicated that Type A individuals reported a higher frequency of conflict with subordinates than Type B individuals. Type A individuals also reported being less likely to handle conflicts through the accommodation style than Type B's.

Baron (1989, p.292) also reports that several differences between *males and females* were observed. Females reported experiencing conflict with others less frequently than males did. In addition, they also indicated stronger tendencies than males to handle conflict through collaboration or avoidance, but weaker tendencies to deal with conflict through competition. According to Ruble and Schneer (1994, p.157)

research on gender differences in conflict handling has yielded mixed results. In their research they found that no significant differences were obtained for accommodating, avoiding, or collaborating styles in work- or task-oriented settings. However, statistically significant gender differences were found for competing and compromising (p.163). Women reported greater tendencies to compromise and lesser tendencies to compete than men.

Culture is another factor that becomes prevalent when an individual has to confront and handle conflict (Donohue & Kolt, 1992). Different cultures have different perspectives on conflict and the handling thereof. According to Rubin et al. (1994) conflicts are often found in communities where norms are breaking down, because some community members begin to aspire to outcomes that others are not willing to let them have.

A study by Kozan (1991, p. 101) supports the notion of external cultural forces shaping the behaviour of managers in the area of conflict management. More research in this area is required. Research of this nature can produce important theoretical and practical implications for managers and their subordinates in dealing with conflict, particularly in South Africa, a country so diverse in different cultures that it has become known as the "rainbow" nation.

In summary, it is evident that there are various antecedent conditions that cause conflict. If one knows what caused the conflict it becomes easier to focus on those conditions and engage in a problem solving conflict handling mode.

Conflict is analysed on various levels, including intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup and intergroup. The interpersonal level is of particular importance for the purpose of this study.

The styles of handling interpersonal conflict, i.e. the way in which conflict is approached and handled determines the constructiveness thereof. Conflict handling styles are divided into three broad categories; win-lose, lose-lose and win-win.

Several models of conflict handling styles have been developed of which the dyadic, two-dimensional model of Thomas is the most significant. According to this model conflicting parties either have a high concern for others needs; a high concern for their own needs or a combination of the two. This in turn will determine the preferred conflict handling style of the conflicting parties, i.e. avoidance, competing, collaboration, compromise and accommodation.

In addition, the choice of a preferred conflict handling style can be influenced by factors such as personality, relative power, gender and culture.

Folger and Poole (in De Moor, 1989) best summarise this section by stating that there is no magic formula for conflict management.

2.6 SUMMARY

In today's complex and changing world conflict is an intricate part of life. Many have studied the concept and many more will study the concept in future. As a result of the enormous interest from the various fields of study, including psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology and history, the concept has acquired several meanings.

Historically conflict was regarded as a fight or skirmish and therefore considered to be destructive. However, the contemporary view is that conflict is neither desirable nor undesirable, but *inevitable* and a fact of life. Conflict *per se* is therefore not constructive or destructive but it is one's perspective of conflict and the way one handles conflict that determines its effect. Various perspectives on

conflict exist, which include micro level perspectives, economical perspectives, industrial relations, negotiations and third party interventions.

Several models on conflict have been developed. The most important model for the purpose of this study is the Process or dyadic model developed by Thomas in the mid 1970's. The model has undergone minor changes since its inception, but it has been used extensively in its various forms by researchers and practitioners.

As it was recognised that the way in which conflict is handled determines the success thereof, research has shifted its focus away from trying to establish the causes of conflict to that of establishing the effect of the different conflict handling styles. The different conflict handling styles according to the model of Kilmann and Thomas (1975) are: competing, collaborating, accommodating, avoiding and compromising. The choice of a particular style is determined by a persons' concern to satisfy his/her own or the needs of the conflicting party.

From the literature review it is clear that individuals have *preferred* styles of handling conflict. In addition, these preferred styles are determined by a variety of factors, including personality, gender, cultural background and then in particular, relative power between the conflicting parties.

The next chapter focuses on the concept of power, and in particular the sources of power, as the sources determine an individual's relative power in relationships.

CHAPTER 3

POWER

3.1 INTRODUCTION

For most of the duration of life on earth the principle form of power was physical - the ability to rend, to tear, to seize, to pin down and to destroy. For mankind such abilities have become less important. Significant power in human affairs is now in the form of money, property, position, acclaim, possessions, influence and love.

Indeed, understanding power and its application, coupled with sensitivity to cultural values, provides the best means of understanding leadership and what leaders do. It helps us understand how leaders lead, what they do in exercising leadership, and why some people are good leaders and others are not - even though they occupy the same or similar positions in organisations and groups. Power theory is also critical in helping us understand follower behaviour. Thus, it is central to understanding relationships.

Power is manifested as an aspect of interpersonal behaviour in social situations. People are always interacting in group settings to secure goals and desired results. All interactive communication is purposeful, and to achieve a certain purpose the individual must engage in power activity.

Power is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon which displays itself in various situations. It appears in the behaviour of individuals and groups, and in their efforts to relate to the physical and social environments. To be successful in this process, one needs to understand where power comes from and the dynamics thereof.

Knowing the origin of power facilitates understanding of our own power and thereby increases our capacity to take action.

Taking action and motivating others to take action requires that one has the means to do so. These means may come in the form of one's position, status, or due to personal characteristics. These means are generally known as sources of power (Fairholm, 1993).

The main aim of this chapter is to provide a holistic perspective on the concept of power and to deduce the sources of power from this in a logical, systematic manner.

3.2 DEFINING POWER

3.2.1 Definition

Lukes (1986, p.4) postulates that no single or generic definition of power is possible due to the multi-faceted and complex nature of the phenomenon. According to Gibbs (1994), a generic definition leads to a pervasiveness which makes the concept of power elusive and redundant, for it has no meaning apart from the ideas of social interaction. It seems that power is one of those concepts that inevitably involves endless disputes about its proper use on the part of its users.

For the purpose of this study different definitions will be discussed, and from these, specific themes and/or commonalities will be identified and further elaborated upon.

We may say about power what Saint Augustine said about time: *"We all know perfectly well what it is - until someone asks us"* (Fairholm, 1993, p.6).

Dahl (in Mumby, 1988, p.56) postulates that power is not something that a person possesses, but is rather a *relation* among people: "A has power over B to the extent

that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do". All power relations comprise of three dimensions (de Jouvenel in Wrong, 1988, p.14):

- The *extensiveness* of a power relation may be broad or narrow. The former is illustrated by an isolated relation in which a single person exercises power over a single other, the latter in which one or a few people exercise power over many others.
- *Comprehensiveness* of power refers to the number of scopes in which the power holder(s) controls the activities of the power subjects. Power holder refers to an individual exerting power and power subject refers to an individual on whom the power is exerted. At the one extreme there is the power a parent holds over an infant, which is nearly total in comprehensiveness, extending to virtually everything the child does.
- The third generic attribute of power relations is the *intensity* of the relation - i.e. the range of effective options open to the power holder, within each of the scopes of the power subject's conduct over which he wields power.

According to Fairholm (1993) power is the capacity to achieve your own aims in interrelationships with others, even in the face of their *opposition* or resistance. Lukes (1986) postulates that opposition or resistance is relevant in the sense that, if it is realised, it provides the test by which one can measure relative power among parties conflicting over an issue.

Russel (in Sik Hung, 1980, p.9) argues that power is the production of *intended* effects. Gibbs (1994) and Lukes (1986) elaborate on this stating that power is the capacity to bring about those intended effects. Wrong (1988) emphasises that in treating power as merely a capacity one runs the risk of seeing it as vested too exclusively in the power holder from where it radiates to others. Power is a relation

between two or more actors - in effect saying that someone's belief that someone else has power actually confers power on the latter (Folger et al., 1993).

Wrong (1988) further elaborates that power is not only the production of intended effects, but should also include the possibility of producing unintended effects. To illustrate one may ask: "Does the elephant who dances with the chickens exercise a power of life and death over them even though he has no wish to trample them underfoot?"

Emerson (in Das and Cotton, 1988, 534) suggests that power resides implicitly in others' *dependency*. That is, the parties in power relationships are tied to each other by mutual dependency. Brass and Burkhardt (in Nohria and Eccles, 1992, p.193) maintain that in order for a person's power to be increased, their dependency must be decreased. In practice this might be extremely difficult, especially in situations where individuals depend on organisations for their monthly income.

Radtke and Stam (1994) add another dimension by stating that power is a set of *processes* whereby one party can gain and maintain the capacity to impose its will repeatedly upon another, despite any opposition, by its potential to contribute or withhold critical resources, as well as by offering or withholding rewards, or by threatening or invoking punishment. Power is a process, because of the ongoing communication and negotiation between the related parties.

The following themes are identified from the above definitions:

- Power only exists within *relationships*, where at least two or more people are involved in ongoing communication and negotiation. Therefore power is a relational concept and not an individual concept (Donohue & Kolt, 1992).

- Power is not merely an ability but it could also be *conferred* upon a person.
- The effect(s) of power can be *intentional* or *unintentional*.
- There must be some form of *dependency* between the different parties for a power relationship to exist. Why would any person do anything against his wishes if he is not dependent on the power holder for some form of reward?

Taking the above mentioned into consideration and the fact that this study concerns superiors and subordinates in an organisational setting, power is defined as: "*a process whereby one party has the ability to produce intended and/or unintended outcomes facilitated by a dependency relationship between superior and subordinate*".

This definition is by no means irrefutable but it provides a basic understanding of the concept for the purposes of this study.

Concern with differences between power and related concepts such as persuasion, domination, force, and control stands to reason. Some writers use these terms interchangeably. Others make meticulous distinctions, which, while useful to their particular discussion have little value when comparing different writers and disciplines. The complexity of power makes it vital to distinguish it from related concepts commonly known as the *forms* or power.

3.2.2 Forms of power

Three forms of power are traditionally distinguished, ranging on the continuum from coercive to consensual (Wrong, 1988). The three forms depict major types of power

use, each identifiable from the other in some specific dimensions. The forms power can take on are *force, manipulation and persuasion*.

a) Force

Force power most often refers to physical, biological or psychological force and is linked to the concept of domination (Boulding, 1990).

Force is the ability to impose obstacles restricting the other's freedom or inflict pain or discomfort, whether physical or psychological (Fairholm, 1993). It is the most effective form of power in the sense that people respond more directly to its application than to any other power form. Force power is at the *coercive* end of the continuum.

The most direct form of force is violence, albeit nonviolence may also be a form of force. The recent police strike action, which included go-slows, marches and the refusal to work overtime, is a good example of a nonviolent form of force. These tactics were instrumental in forcing and changing governments' attitudes towards policemen's low remuneration and long working hours.

Arendt (in Fairholm, 1993) contends that power and violence are opposites: where the one rules absolutely, the other is absent. Violence appears where power is in jeopardy; when an effort to exercise power by other means fail, force may be applied as a final "persuader". This type of scenario should be avoided, because it could have a detrimental effect on future power relations, especially if the same parties are involved. It sets a negative precedent. The rationale behind this is: Why go to the trouble of trying to persuade or influence the other party if you know that force is the only solution?

b) Manipulation

When the power holder conceals his intent from the power subject, that is, the intended effect he wishes to produce, he is attempting to manipulate the latter (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1990). Consequently, force is overt and manipulation is covert. Manipulation is usually used in conjunction with other forms of power such as persuasion or influence (Fairholm, 1993).

It is clear that manipulation connotes calculation, premeditation, and detachment and not transparency, sharing, or candour. This complicates any opposition to manipulation, since the target is unaware of the use of this form of power.

Manipulation is widely used in political propaganda, advertising campaigns, as well as organisational settings where a supervisor (or subordinate) conceals or distorts certain information in order to elicit certain behaviour from the target(s). But once this manipulation becomes known it has a detrimental effect on future relationships and trust.

c) Persuasion

According to Pienaar and Spoelstra (1991) persuasion is communicative behaviour intended to change the responses, attitudes or behaviour of the other party. Rubin et al. (1994) indicate that it is a technique whereby one party convinces the other party to lower its aspirations through a series of logical appeals. It is conscious and occurs when:

- a threat to at least one person's goals is observed
- the source and degree of this threat is sufficiently important to warrant the expenditure of effort involved in persuasion (Reardon, 1981).

Boulding (1990) uses the terms persuasion and integrative power interchangeably. He contends that the successful use thereof is a function of the ability to create images of the future and to persuade other people that these images are valid. The integrative power of the founders and practitioners of religions is to a large extent linked to the development of images of the future. If a person wants to resign from an organisation, and the supervisor and the company want to persuade him not to, a positive image of the future is created for this individual - a carrot: possible promotion, a raise or more responsibility.

Fairholm (1993) added a fourth form of power known as *influence*.

d) *Influence*

Bass (in Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1990, p.222) is of the opinion that researchers have often confused power with influence, implicitly or explicitly treating the concepts as synonyms. Whereas persuasion power is based on an argument of the present situation, influence refers to a respect for the other person arising from past or other relationship experiences. Influence flows out of common values, ideals and goals (Fairholm, 1993). It is clear that the concepts persuasion and influence are barely distinguishable and this is probably the reason why most researchers use them interchangeably.

3.2.3 Summary

Power is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon which can be defined in many different ways, depending from what viewpoint or discipline it is researched. There are nevertheless certain commonalities which most of these definitions share:

- Power exists within *relationships*. The relationship is defined in terms of three dimensions: extensiveness, comprehensiveness and intensity.
- Power implies *dependency*.

- Power is aimed at *changing behaviour*.

The concept of power is often confused with related concepts such as force, manipulation, persuasion and influence. These concepts are different manifestations of power and are commonly known as the *forms* of power.

Due to the multifaceted nature of conflict several theories have been developed to illustrate and investigate this complex phenomenon.

3.3 THEORIES OF POWER

A theory is commonly considered to be something that exists in opposition to a fact. It is viewed as a hypothesis about what is true, a speculation about reality - it is something that is not *known* to be true.

Therefore it is simply one way of looking at a given set of objects or events. Rather than true or false, a theory is useful or useless, depending on whether the predictions it generates turn out to be verifiable.

Power is both an enigma and a central theme in organisational theory. It is an aspect of formal and informal relationships. The organisation is a social grouping of at least two people involved in some common enterprise with accepted goals, method and structure. The basic tenant of organisation has created an environment where people must depend on others for resources of information, energy, and instructions necessary to accomplish individual or group goals. Hence the organisational construct is in every respect one of power.

Several theories have been developed in this regard of which the main ones that deserve mentioning and further discussion are: *exchange theory*, *power-dependence theory*, *resource-dependency framework*, *strategic contingencies' theory*, and *McClelland's "need for power theory"*.

3.3.1 Exchange theory

According to Fairholm (1993) the researchers mainly responsible for the development and evolution of the exchange theory are Simon - 1957, Cartright - 1965, Bierstadt - 1950, Homans - 1958, Thibaut and Kelley - 1959, and Gouldner - 1960. Power is viewed in terms of symmetry-asymmetry, as systems of control over information and behaviour, and as a function of status (Donohue & Kolt, 1992).

Organisational subunits supply resources to the others in exchange for a return of resources upon which they are dependent. Asymmetry in the dependencies that underlie such exchanges explain asymmetry in power between the parties involved (Gummer, 1985, p.100). According to this viewpoint one party tries to affect the balance of rewards and costs in the relationship: the more power the party acquires, the less power the other enjoys. In some organisations exchanges are regulated by workflow, procedures and the prescribed hierarchy of authority (Brass & Burkhardt, in Nohria & Eccles, 1992, p.194).

3.3.2 Power-Dependency theory

Working from exchange theory, Emerson (in Mainiero, 1986, p.431) noted that power and dependency share an inverse relationship (Miceli & Near, 1992, p.66). This came to be known as the power-dependence theory which received favourable attention from researchers in organisational (Mainiero, 1986, p.431) and social behaviour (Das & Cotton, 1988, p.536). The dependency of one individual, "A", upon another individual, "B", manifests in one of two ways:

- *Directly proportional* to "A's" motivational investment in the goals mediated by "B" and
- *Inversely proportional* to the availability of those goals outside of the "A" and "B" relation.

Emerson's theory led to the formulation of the following equation (Das & Cotton, 1988, p.535):

$$P_{ab} = D_{ba} \text{ and } P_{ba} = D_{ab}$$

where

P is power,

D is dependency, and

a and *b* are two entities (individuals, groups, organisations, etc.).

The power of entity *a* over entity *b* is equal to the dependency of entity *b* upon entity *a*. At the same time, the power of *b* over *a* is equal to the dependency of *a* upon *b*.

The power which arises from dependency can be understood in the context of equity theory and the related concepts of dissonance and distributive justice (Twomey, 1978, p.145).

The relationship between power and dependence becomes more complex when one considers the multitude or variety of outcomes that may be considered relevant or in demand in organisations. "A" may control a particular outcome that is important to "B", but "B" may control another resource that is desired by "A". Thus, power acquisition (or increase) in an organisation can be obtained in two ways:

- dependence on others must be decreased and/or
- others' dependence on you must be increased.

However, Dunford (1992) emphasises that power is not a fixed-sum game, i.e. increasing the power of one group does not necessarily imply a loss of power to the other.

The centrality of resources in power theory led to the further development of the power-dependence theory.

3.3.3 Resource-dependency theory

Salancik and Pfeffer (1974, p.453) state that power (the inverse of dependence) originates from the control of relevant resources as mentioned above. Their focus on the control of resources became known as the *resource-dependence framework* (Miceli & Near, 1992).

According to this framework organisational members depend on their organisations for resources and, conversely, organisations depend on their members for resources. The main difference between the power-dependence and the resource-dependence framework is that the focus moves from power and dependency between subunits and individuals (power-dependence) to power and dependency between the organisation and its members (resource dependence).

Miceli and Near (1992) suggest that the individuals' power in the organisation is not necessarily an inverse function of his dependence on the organisation. Two dimensions, *influence* (to the extent that these individuals can get others to act) and *dependence* (dependent on resources) affect this relationship. Miceli and Near developed a grid depicting four possible power relationships an individual might encounter in an organisation.

TABLE 3.1
RESOURCE-DEPENDENCE BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS (Miceli & Near, 1992, p.68).

RESOURCES POSSESSED BY THE ORGANISATION	RESOURCES POSSESSED BY THE INDIVIDUAL	
	Limited	Considerable
Limited	Individual is relatively uninfluential and independent, e.g. a counter clerk in a fast food restaurant, a bookkeeper for a local boutique <i>Cell 1</i>	Individual is relatively influential and independent, e.g. a top manager who has been relatively mobile throughout his or her career, a high performing insurance salesperson <i>Cell 2</i>
Considerable	Individual is relatively uninfluential and dependent, e.g. a secretary in a large pharmaceutical company, a steelworker <i>Cell 3</i>	Individual is relatively influential and dependent, e.g. a computer systems engineer with unique knowledge of a patented product, a surgeon with a rare speciality in a hospital with matching facilities <i>Cell 4</i>

In *cell 1*, both the organisation and individuals possess limited resources that are needed by the other. These individuals seem to be *uninfluential* and simultaneously fairly *independent* of the organisation.

Cell 2 reveals those individuals with considerable resources, whilst those possessed by the organisation are limited. These individuals are both *influential* and *independent* and are therefore highly powerful relative to the organisation.

Cell 3 reflects those individuals who do not possess valued resources and work for organisations whose rewards are hard to match. These individuals are *relatively uninfluential* and *highly dependent*.

In *cell 4*, individuals possess influence because of their expertise, charisma or other power bases, but they do not have many employment opportunities outside the organisation that could make use of their unique skills. Therefore they are highly *influential* but rather *dependent*.

The above framework provides a useful method for determining the relative power between the employees and the organisation.

3.3.4 Strategic Contingencies theory

The strategic contingencies theory was originally devised by Hickson, Hinings, Lee, Schneck and Pennings (1971, p.216).

According to this theory a subunit's power is derived from control over *contingencies* that are strategic for the activities of other subunits and the organisation as a whole (Fairholm, 1993). As the organisation and its environment change, so do those factors that are considered critical for the success of the organisation.

Those who are able to cope with and adapt to organisational and environmental *uncertainties* and *contingencies* and are *unsubstitutable* are considered to be powerful (Hickson et al., 1971, p.216).

According to Lachman (1989, p.232) organisational uncertainties are regarded as the lack of information about future events involving inputs, processes, outcomes, and the way they should be handled. House (1988, p.309) defines contingencies as those

events and activities both inside and outside the organisation that are essential for the attainment of organisational goals.

Fairholm (1993, p.166) summarises the contingencies theory with a comment from Nord:

"Them that has the gold make the rules."

All of the above theories focus on power relations of different entities within an organisation, which include individuals, subunits and the organisation itself. However, power theory has also expanded to include the development of an individual on a personality level.

The discussion of power theory will be incomplete if no mention is made or cognizance taken of some individuals' need for power, others' need for more power, and others' satisfaction with powerlessness. In essence, it should be asked what contribution power makes to peoples' lives.

3.3.5 McClelland's "need for power" theory

Another theory deserving further attention is the "need for power" theory, developed by McClelland (Plunkett & Attner, 1992). This theory is both a result of and constitutes part of McClelland's motivational theory which specifically focuses on three needs displayed by individuals:

- Need for *achievement* refers to a desire to excel or achieve in relation to a set of standards.
- Need for *affiliation* reflects the desire for friendship, cooperation, and close interpersonal relationships.
- Need for *power*, also referred to as "n Pow" (amount of power), is defined as a desire to control others or have influence over others.

This study is mainly concerned with individuals' need for power as the relation between power and conflict handling styles are examined.

According to McClelland (in Staw & Cummings, 1988, p.319) the need for power is a socially learned set of associations between the arousal or exercise of power and the experience of positive effect.

Pierce and Dunham (1990) distinguish between two *types* of power needs:

- *Personalised* power seeking involves dominating others for the sake of domination. The focus is on the interests of the individual and not on the interests of the group/team or the organisation.
- *Socialised* power seeking on the other hand, involves acquiring power in order to benefit the group and/or the organisation.

House (1988) suggests the following propositions, which are based on extensive research undertaken in this particular field:

- The *acquisition and exercise of power* will be experienced as more rewarding by individuals high in the need for power than the acquisition and exercise of power by individuals low in the need for power.
- When *significant others* are observed as engaging in power oriented behaviour, individuals high in the need for power will emulate that behaviour and will be successful in gaining power to a greater extent than individuals low in the need for power.
- When threatened with or when experiencing the *loss of personal influence* or control, individuals high in the need for power will assert more power

oriented behaviours and will be successful in gaining power to a greater extent than individuals low in the need for power.

Research conducted by McClelland and his associates revealed that the most effective organisational managers share the following characteristics (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1990):

- They display a high n Pow, or power motivation
- They use their power to achieve organisational goals
- They practice a participative or "coaching" style when interacting with their subordinates
- They do not concentrate on developing good relations with others - a low need for affiliation

Another concept which is less well known and deserves further attention along with the need for power, is *power inhibition*. McClelland (in House, 1988) describes it as a personality trait that serves to psychologically constrain a person from the exercise of power in socially undesirable or coercive ways such as manipulation, impulsive aggressiveness, authoritarian behaviour or the use of violence. The research on this personality construct suggests that individuals with both a high need for power and high power inhibition are more likely to use socially desirable behaviours in the exercise of power. On the other hand, individuals who display a high need in power motivation and a low power inhibition are more likely to use coercion or other socially undesirable ways of exercising power.

The need for power should not be viewed in isolation as it constitutes only a part of McClelland's theory of motivation. It does however provide a useful framework for understanding individuals' power motivation.

Unfortunately, having the need for power is not in itself sufficient to bring about intended changes. Although it is probably a prerequisite, an individual also needs

source(s) of power from which power evolves and can be used. These sources of power is what makes an individual powerful (Pfeffer, 1992a). Therefore any study of power will be incomplete without reference to these sources of power. As this constitutes one of the main variables in the present study, it will be discussed comprehensively in the following section.

3.3.6 Summary

The different theories mentioned above evolved over a long period of time, each making unique contributions to the theory of power. The exchange theory focuses on the asymmetry of power in relationships, when the parties exchange resources. The power dependence theory is a result of Emerson's research and it emphasises dependencies that occur in power relationships. The resource dependency theory evolved from the power dependency theory and highlights the fact that control over resources precipitate dependencies and consequently the emergence of power. This theory also underscores the relative power that exist between the organisation and its members. According to the strategic contingencies theory, entities in organisations who have the ability to control contingencies, adapt to uncertainties and are unsubstitutable are the ones who possess power.

McClelland's theory accentuates intrapersonal power, in particular the "need for power." According to his theory the acquisition of power is a socially learned experience. However, the successful application of power is not a function of knowledge alone, it is a function of the *sources of power* available to an entity.

3.4 SOURCES OF POWER

The sources of power denote control over needed and scarce resources. Resources may be defined as anything physical or psychological that is owned and made available and valuable to others in meeting their perceived needs (Fairholm, 1993, p.181).

For many supervisors the process of aggressively competing for power and control over greater amounts of organisational resources has traditionally been a part of organisational life (Kanter, 1989, p.86). While climbing the corporate ladder, aspiring supervisors have been groomed with the notion that the accumulation of power leads to both personal and organisational success.

Power can only be exerted from a particular source of power. In fact, French and Raven (1980), viewed power as a function of the sources of power available.

The values and assumptions of management determine the way in which a manager will choose to express his power over his subordinates. These values in turn, are determined by the nature of the wider environment of the organisation (Templer, 1980). Limerick (1976) suggests that management values can be expressed in terms of two key assumptions which management make regarding the superior-subordinate relationship within the organisation:

■ *Assumptions about human nature:*

Management can essentially see their employees as being reactive or proactive in their behaviour patterns. The reactive employee is perceived to be acting only in response to already existing change pressures from the environment and should be pressurised by management to take part in organisational life. The proactive employee, on the other hand, is considered to be closely identified with the organisation, anticipating the organisation's needs and enthusiastically going about meeting these needs. Thus, for example, the manager who assumes his employees are primarily reactive, will make little attempt to achieve their moral involvement in the organisations, but will use "stick and carrot" methods of achieving employee compliance with his wishes.

■ *Assumptions about the nature of the organisation:*

Broadly viewed, managements' power behaviour is a function of their assumptions regarding the organisation. The three perspectives that affect management's assumption are (see chapter 2.3.4 for a complete discussion regarding the perspectives):

Unitary ideology - Management maintains the *legitimate* prerogative to manage within a unitary structure where their *authority* is viewed as unquestionable.

Ploralistic ideology - Ploralists view the organisations as a coalition of individuals and groups who strive to achieve their objectives. Management do not make decisions on their own but in *collaboration* with their employees.

Radical ideology - Managers ascribing to this ideology presume that they are in a continuous battle with the employees. Thus *coercive power* is used to influence the behaviour of subordinates.

Limerick (1976) continues to show how different sets of management's assumptions about human nature and the nature of the organisation, lead to different types of authority structures, and hence management power structures. Thus, for example, managers who assume their employees to be essentially reactive and the organisation to be a pluralistic one, will set up a clearly defined hierarchical authority structure, with sufficient coercive power available to management. On the other hand, managers who see their employees as pro-active and assume that they have been able to achieve an integrated system type organisation, may well be able to get away without a formal organisational structure and make use of intrinsic reward systems or other sources of power.

The total power you possess in an organisation is a function of collective power acquired from all sources (Dunham, 1984). According to Ivancevich and Matteson (1990) sources of power can be divided into three main categories, namely *interpersonal*, *structural* and *situational*. As structural and situational sources of power extend beyond the scope of this study only interpersonal sources of power will be discussed.

Interpersonal sources refer to the power that is utilized between individuals involved in power relationships, for instance supervisor-subordinate relationships (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1990).

French and Raven's perspective on power have been the major theoretical directive taken in the study of sources of power (Hunt, Mentzer & Danes, 1987, p.378). French and Raven originally identified five common sources of power: *reward power*, *coercive power*, *legitimate power*, *referent power* and *expert power*. This five-fold typology resembles the Etzioni trichotomy, but focuses more extensively on the social relationship - the interaction of power exercise (Fairholm, 1993).

In his sixteenth-century treatise *The Prince*, Machiavelli presents an interesting viewpoint when he asks whether it is better to have a relationship based on love (personal power) or one based on fear (position power) (Wrong, 1988 & House, 1988). Yukl and Fable's (1991, p.421) research results suggest that it is useful to conceptualise power sources in terms of a two-tier taxonomy, with two broad categories (positional and personal), each having specific components that are partially overlapping. The supposition can thus be made that the sources of power can further be subdivided into two categories: *positional* (reward, coercive and legitimate) and *personal* (referent and expert) sources of power.

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) suggest that positional and personal power bases constitute an interaction-influence system. That is, power does not develop in a vacuum, rather each power base tends to affect each of the other power bases.

Yukl and Fable (1991, p.422) indicate that the sources of power for the attainment of commitment to unusual requests appear to differ from the sources important for obtaining compliance with routine requests. Expert power and referent power tend to be useful sources in the former situation and reward, coercive and legitimate power in the latter situation.

According to Hersey and Blanchard (1982) situational leadership theory can provide the basis for understanding the potential impact of each power source on the leader-follower/superior-subordinate relationship. The maturity of the follower not only dictates which style of leadership will have the highest probability of success, but also determines the source(s) of power that the leader should use in order to induce compliance or influence behaviour.

Other sources of power were later identified and added to French and Raven's typology, but the original five sources mentioned above will be emphasised in this discourse. Subsequently a discussion of the positional and personal sources of power.

3.4.1 Positional sources of power

Positional sources of power refer to those sources that are conferred to a person due to his/her hierarchical position in the organisation (Plunkett & Attner, 1992). Research by Mainiero (1986, p.437) on the relationship between positional power and dependency (Emersons' theory) in a task and career situation, suggests that the more dependent a supervisor is on others, the less his perceived positional power; and the greater the dependency of others for task and career related sources for support the greater the positional power.

The different sources of positional power are *reward power*, *coercive power* and *legitimate power*.

a) *Reward power*

Power can be derived from the ability to reward compliance (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1990, p.348). If rewards or potential rewards such as recognition, a challenging job assignment, a salary increase or additional resources to complete a job are promised, the employee may reciprocate by responding to orders, requests and directions (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly, 1991).

Templer (1980, p.21) states that the effective use of reward power necessitates two conditions. Firstly, the supervisor must be *able* to deliver rewards that the subordinate values, such as higher wages, praise or recognition. Since reward power is based on a perception of ability to reward, it is irrelevant in the short term whether or not you actually have the ability. The other person must merely perceive you to have the ability (Dunham, 1984). However, in the long term the other person is likely to change his/her perception about your ability to reward if you are not observed as able to provide rewards.

Secondly, the subordinate must *believe* that he will receive these rewards through conforming to the desires of the supervisor. If the subordinate conforms but does not receive any of the rewards as expected, it will discourage him/her to conform to future requests. Reward power is therefore closely related to the *expectancy theory* of motivation (Plunkett & Attner, 1992).

Research done by Lewicki and Litterer (1985) indicate that rewards tend to be used in the following circumstances:

- The power holder expects resistance from the target.
- The target is perceived as dissimilar to the power-holders and rewards (primarily money) are most likely to be used to prevent future recurrence of resistance rather than to eliminate present resistance.
- When persuasion efforts fail or are likely to fail.

Reward power is sometimes used in combination with coercive power and these two can be subject to semantic confusion. It is important to describe coercive power before comparing it with and evaluating it against reward power.

b) *Coercive power*

Coercive power is the opposite of reward power, and it refers to the power to *punish* or to take something away from the target person for non-compliance (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1990). In virtually all the forms of coercive power, *fear* is present. Thus, individuals comply because they are afraid of the punishment. Machiavelli (in Hersey & Blanchard, 1982) warned that care should be taken that fear is not turned into hatred, for hatred often evokes overt behaviour in terms of retaliation, undermining, and attempts to overthrow.

According to Sik Hung (1980) coercive power takes on three forms: *physical*, *economical* and *psychological*. In most (ideally all) organisations physical punishment is inconceivable, causing supervisors and managers to utilise economic and psychological means of coercion for non-compliance. These could range from refusal to pay bonuses, endorse pay increases or promotions, give a poor performance evaluation during performance appraisal, demotion or dismissal.

Folger et al. (1990) refer to coercive power as threat power. The main behavioral response the power holder is likely to elicit from the target person is that of submission or compliance. Boulding (1990) states that degrees of willingness to comply and other possible reactions prevail rather than compliance *per se*. One possible reaction is *defiance*. If the target person refuses to comply, the decision to punish has to be made by the power holder. If the punishment is not carried out as suggested or guaranteed, the power holder will not be seen as holding a coercive power base. In future situations the target person will again defy before complying to coercive power or threats exerted by the power holder.

A second possible reaction to coercive power is *counter threat* - "If you don't pay us, we will strike!" In this case the threatened party must also have, or convincingly pretend to have, means of destruction. This again places the responsibility with the power holder to carry out the threat.

Another possible reaction to threat is *flight*. In an organisation this for example causes the threatened person to ask for a transfer or to resign from the organisation. The success of flight depends on the principle "the further, the weaker" - the further you are from the power holder the weaker his power.

Lewicki and Litterer (1985) postulate that the conditions for the use of coercive power are similar to those described in the use of reward power: the target is dependent on the power holder in some way and the punishment can be administered in a manner that will ensure the target person's compliance.

Kipnes (1976) stated that "sanctions", whether positive or negative, are most likely to be involved when expectations of successful influence are at its lowest. Positive sanctions appear to be preferred when the power-holder wishes to retain the goodwill of the target person, or when the power-holder anticipates that their compliance is likely to decrease in the future. Negative sanctions appear to be preferred when goodwill is involved to a lesser extent and the influence attempts are directed at changing behaviour rather than maintaining it.

In general, punishment has not been looked upon favourably by organisational practitioners (Arvey & Ivancevich, 1982, p.159). Firstly, it is thought that the use of punishment by an employer will result in *undesirable emotional side effects*, such as anxiety and aggression towards the punishing agent. Secondly, the use of punishment in organisations is considered *old-fashioned*. However, Arvey and Ivancevich (1982) caution that punishment should not merely be seen as reactive, it could also be utilised proactively, like in behaviour modification programmes.

It is often pointed out that victims can be left in the wake of the use of coercive power (Brewer, Ainsworth & Wynne, 1984). This is probably why coercive power often has temporary positive effects and is followed by a long process of retort later on. Research by Wexley and Snell (1987, p.51) indicated that subordinates react negatively to supervisors who are seen as applying coercive power too often.

Arvey and Ivancevich (1982) postulate that punishment, and thus the use of coercive power does not necessarily have to be negative. There are a number of factors that affect the effectiveness of punishment:

- Firstly, *timing* of the punishment. It is commonly known that all organisations have a disciplinary code and procedure in which guidelines are provided for the handling of discipline (punishment). One of the guidelines may be that all disciplinary hearings/meetings should be held as soon as possible after the punishable response has occurred. The main thrust of this process is on behaviour modification, which should be done promptly in order to benefit both the individual and the organisation.
- Secondly, the *intensity* of the punishment should be noted. The disciplinary code of an organisation usually stipulates that certain forms of punishment will be applicable to certain categories of transgressions. The intensity often varies according to the seriousness of the offence.
- Thirdly, the provision of a *clear rationale* is a prerequisite necessary for an effective punishment process. People want to know why they are punished. The reason(s) should therefore be clear and *consistently* applied throughout the organisation. The inconsistent application of rules and punishment in an organisation will lead to confusion, distrust and unnecessary conflict.

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between reward and coercive power. Is the withholding of a reward equivalent to punishment? Is the withdrawal of punishment equivalent to a reward? According to French and Raven (1980, p.192) the distinction between the two bases of power is important because the dynamics are different. The concept of *sanctions* often groups the two together despite their opposite effects. The main difference between the two bases are that reward power is far more likely to produce desired consequences, with less close observation and control than coercive power (Lewicki & Litterer, 1985).

The results of a study undertaken by Hinkin and Schriesheim (1993, p.797) suggest the following:

- it would be to a supervisors' benefit to take advantage of opportunities to provide contingent rewards as it enhances all five power sources, in particular expert and referent sources;
- the use of noncontingent punishments should be avoided; and
- that the use of contingent punishment appears to enhance legitimate power when it is contingent on behaviour.

This suggests that supervisors need not refrain from punishing poor performances, subject to the caution that punitive behaviour must clearly be seen by subordinates as resulting from their poor performances. According to the conflict theory postulated by Miller and Dollard (in Hall & Lindzey, 1985) the immediate effects of reward and punishment are greater than the delayed ones.

Reward and therefore also coercive power is often used to back up legitimate power (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1990, p.349).

c) *Legitimate power*

Legitimate power is derived from the ability to influence because of a person's *position* in an organisation (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1990). The higher the position in the organisation, the greater the perceived power (Plunkett & Attner, 1992). According to Templer (1980, p.21) legitimate power can also be called formal authority. It involves compliance with rules, instructions and orders that the subordinate perceives as being legitimate.

Results of a study done by Yukl and Fable (1991, p.422) indicate that legitimate power is a very important source of day-to-day influence in organisations. This finding is consistent with the proposition that authority systems are essential for large organisations to function smoothly and effectively.

Dunham (1984) is of the opinion that legitimate power is not only based on a position in the formal organisation but also includes project leaders, chairpersons of meetings, union leaders, or legitimacy based on cultural or social norms (e.g. listening and complying to elderly individuals who have the right to command).

The *Milgram experiment* on [destructive] obedience to authority and the concept of the illusion of power is valuable in explaining legitimate power (Baron & Byrne, 1987, p.251). In these studies Milgram attempted to determine whether individuals would follow commands from an experimenter to inflict considerable pain and suffering on another person - a totally innocent stranger. The subjects in the experiments were adult men drawn from a variety of occupations and social positions in the Connecticut-Newhaven area. Their task was that of delivering electric shocks to another person, an accomplice of the experimenter, each time he made an error in a simple learning task. These shocks were to be delivered by means of thirty switches. Subjects were told to move to the next higher switch each time the learner made an error. According to the labels on the switches the final shock would consist of 450 volts. In reality, the accomplice never received any shocks during

the experiment. At one hundred and fifty volts the accomplice shouted "let me out!", and said that his heart could not stand the pain any longer, of course faking all behaviour. Most of the participants became very upset. Some asked the experimenter whether it was proper to continue. The experimenter always replied, "let's carry on, because the experiment requires that we carry on". The subjects were also told, "you have no other choice".

Out of a total of forty participants, 65% obeyed the experimenter all the way to the very highest level of the shock generator. Most of the participants showed extreme signs of emotional strain and psychological conflict during the experiment. They repeatedly asked permission to stop, yet at the same time they kept on increasing the voltage.

The Milgram experiment indicates that exercising power in an authoritative way is not the only way that power can be exerted. Coercive power is often exerted by individuals who have only minimum or no actual power. An individual may influence others significantly simply because he or she is perceived to have power.

Baron and Byrne (1987) list three possible reasons for this strange phenomenon. Firstly, the persons in authority relieve the pressure and responsibility from those who obey - "I was only carrying out orders", is the defence many offer after obeying harsh or cruel directions. In the Milgram experiment the participants were told from the outset that the experimenter, and not the participants, will be held responsible for the well-being of the victims.

Secondly, people in authority often possess visible badges or signs of their status or power. Faced with obvious reminders of who is in charge, most people find it difficult to resist.

Thirdly, the commands are often relatively small and innocuous at first. Only later do they increase in scope and come to require those who receive them to behave in dangerous or objectionable ways.

Pfeffer (1992b, p.41) denotes three problems with hierarchy as a way to get things done. Firstly, it does not correspond with contemporary thinking. People are progressively becoming educated, workplaces democratised and the use of empowerment processes advocated. Secondly, a more serious problem derives from the fact that most people work in positions which, in order to accomplish their objectives, need the cooperation of others who do not fall within their direct chain of command - whom they can not reward or punish even if they wanted to. Thirdly, the question arises what if the person at the apex of the hierarchical pyramid, the one whose orders are being followed, is incorrect? When authority is vested in one person it could have a detrimental effect on the organisation if that person is to fail or leave the organisation.

The above three sources of power conclude the different positional sources of power. As indicated, the perception of the subordinate still plays a major part in conferring the amount of power to a supervisor, even though these bases of power refer to an individual's hierarchical position, or other forms of authority in the organisation. It is thus the perception of the subordinate that determines the comprehensiveness and the intensity of the power relationship.

3.4.2 Personal sources of power

Personal power refers to power possessed by a single person (Boulding, 1990). The personal sources are based on an individual's character and is not linked to a hierarchical position in an organisation. Thus, those who derive their power from their followers and not their position in the organisation, are considered to have personal power (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982).

According to Pfeffer (1992a) one needs to understand and account for how people end up in various situations, and to use this information in evaluating their personal power. He further contends that careful analysis should be made when evaluating personal characteristics as sources of power, particularly if the intention is to take action based on those insights. Boulding (1990) postulates that the personal power of an individual at any age is a product of that person's past.

The two personal sources of power as identified by French and Raven (in Huiton & Reitz, 1980) are *expert power* and *referent power*.

a) *Expert power*

According to Fairholm (1993) expert power refers to those individuals who have skills, knowledge, and abilities needed and respected by others. This is an important base in that anyone, regardless of position in the hierarchy, can exercise expert power over others depending on the special skills possessed. The more difficult it is to replace the expert, the greater the degree of power. Individuals with expert power are seen as a source who are able to solve problems and facilitate production (Brewer et al., 1984).

b) *Referent power*

Individuals who are attractive to others because of their personal characteristics or charisma, possess referent power (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982). Referent power depends partly on the individual's personality and his capacity to inspire others and articulate their hopes. A major element of referent power is a sense of identification with the power holder. In short, people try to "be like" the holder of referent power.

Dunham (1984) mentions that a person allows the holder of referent power to influence them in the hope of receiving the positively valued outcome of association

with this person. However, if that person is already associated with the [referent] power holder, compliance will occur to avoid the negative consequence of disassociation.

According to Rudolph and Peluchette (1993, p.14) followers identify and develop strong emotional bonds of affection with the leader which results in fierce personal loyalty. With this emotional attachment, leaders are able to exercise a significant amount of power over subordinates.

Pfeffer (1992a) postulates that charismatic individuals do not necessarily display these qualities in all situations. A longitudinal study of a school superintendent in Minnesota provides interesting evidence on the interaction between charismatic properties and situational constraints. The superintendent was extremely successful and charismatic in her work, but when she was promoted, the requirements to be successful changed and so did her effectiveness - she was less effective and perceived as being less charismatic. The results indicate that the attributes required to be influential and effective change as situational factors change.

The key factor distinguishing referent power from reward/coercive power is that referent power does not involve the active and direct control of outcomes by the power holder.

Summarising the above, it is stated that the French and Raven typology is useful to explain that the major means available for the expression of managerial power reside either within the supervisor, as in referent and expert power, or within the organisational situation, as in reward, coercive and legitimate power.

It was furthermore clear from the literature that a supervisor is able to mediate reward and coercive power, but that referent and expert power are mediated by the subordinate to a large extent. That is, its effectiveness depend on the subordinate's perception.

The five types of interpersonal power mentioned are not independent from one another. An individual's total power is an aggregation of all the sources of power, but the combination is seldomly simply the sum of the individual elements (Dunham, 1984). On the contrary, these power bases can be used effectively in various combinations and situations (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1990).

As mentioned earlier in the study other interpersonal sources of power have also been identified, of which *information power* is the most significant. According to Dunham (1984), a person possesses information power (nonexpert) if he has information that others are dependent upon. Another source identified by Hersey and Goldsmith (in Hersey & Blanchard, 1982) is *connection power*, which refers to an individual's association with influential or important people inside or outside the organisation. As these power bases do not add to the typology under investigation, reference will only be made to the original five.

3.5 SUMMARY: POWER

The use and abuse of power is part of everyday life, and part and parcel of every social encounter and all relationships. Everybody knows what it is, yet it is extremely difficult to define. This is highlighted by the fact that most of the authors who have studied the concept tended to define it in their own way - through addition or subtraction from previous definitions. This muddle is further amplified by the multitude of disciplines studying power, contributing and providing insight from their own field of expertise and interest. Nevertheless, there is one commonality inherent in all power definitions: i.e. for power to exist, the relationship between the parties should be one of dependency and asymmetry. Dependency comes in various forms, whether it be psychological, physical or economical. This dependency in relationships cause people to do things they would not normally do.

In organisations these dependencies are brought about by *sources* of power, which are used to influence, persuade, manipulate or control others' behaviour to achieve

personal and organisational goals. Five sources of power were explored, viz a viz reward, coercive, legitimate, expert and referent power. These sources were grouped into two broader categories, namely positional sources and personal sources of power. The former refers to an individual's hierarchical position in an organisation and the latter to the personal characteristics of the power holder.

According to the literature the sources are not independent of one another and they are usually utilised in combinations. Coercive power seems to be the least effective source, and even more so, outdated within the contemporary context of democratisation and empowerment. The increase or decrease of an individual's referent and expert sources of power are to a large extent determined by the *perceptions* of others, whereas the positional sources are determined by the organisation.

The study of the sources of power therefore provides one with various challenging opportunities to gain insight into the lives of those who influence, persuade and manipulate, and those who are influenced, persuaded and manipulated.

3.6 POWER AND CONFLICT

The social powers of individuals are active and dynamic within the context of an organisation. Few studies on the relationship between sources of power and conflict handling styles could be located. It appears that not much exploration of this area has taken place. The following however, have relevance to the two concepts: Power has a direct connection to many of the underlying functions of management. As individuals exert energy towards activating others to behave in organisationally effective ways, they are exercising power. Direction, control, planning, coordination, motivation and *conflict handling* are all manifestations of power used in organisations to accomplish results. These powers are directed towards achieving some goal, whether it be personally or organisationally related. However, these social powers confront the social powers of others also striving to achieve their

goals. This situation leads to an ambiguity about the relative power in the relationship (Rubin et al., 1994).

Fairholm (1993) states that conflict is a result of asymmetries of power, values or status. Rummel (1991) contends that these asymmetries lead to conflict resolution which is the *balancing* of individual interests, capabilities, and wills. Research indicates that individuals best manage conflict when the power between them is relatively balanced (Donohue & Kolt, 1992).

Folger and Poole (1984) indicate that any *imbalance in power* poses a serious threat to constructive conflict resolution.

Ample examples of power imbalances of power can be cited from the South African context, especially before the 1994 elections took place. In the political sphere certain groups of people, citizens of the country, did not have the right to vote. Attempts to resolve power imbalances between these citizens and the government led to the worst forms of destructive conflict, violence, killing, underground organisations and so the list continues. In an organisational context the same phenomenon occurred until mine violence in the 1920's occurred. This led to the conception of formal labour relations processes and trade union movements. At present there is greater power symmetry between workers and management, i.e. a balance of powers has occurred in the use of conflict resolution strategies.

Research by Pruitt and Rubin (1986) indicate that the correct use of power can facilitate coordination and consequently reduce conflict. On the other hand, the excessive use of power as perceived by a less powerful group, may cause an increase in conflict.

It is clear from the literature that power not only causes conflict but is also utilised in the resolution of conflict (Fairholm, 1993). Although this might be true, little research has been done to investigate the relationship between the constructs of

sources of power and styles for handling interpersonal conflict (Rahim & Buntzman, 1988, p.195). Most researchers have studied the constructs separately or focused on the causal relationship (Michener, Lawler and Bacharach, 1973, p.155; Lusch, 1976, p.382; Twomey, 1978, p.144; Richmond, Wagner and McCroskey, 1983, p.34).

The study of the relationship between sources of power and conflict handling styles could provide useful information in terms of understanding whether a supervisor deals with conflict in a specific way in accordance with a certain source(s) of power. If this is the case one could argue that by changing a supervisors sources of power, it should also have an effect on his conflict handling styles.

It is the purpose of this study to investigate the possible relationship between the five sources of power and the five conflict handling styles.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapters the motivation and objectives of the study were outlined. The two variables, conflict handling styles and sources of power, were discussed from a holistic perspective through a logical process of deduction. A deductive inference is made when the truth of one statement is necessary, based on another one or set of statements, that is, statement A *necessarily* implies B (Van Veuren, 1991). These two statements are then concatenated or "chained together" - inferring the hypotheses of a study.

This chapter deals with the research design of this study. Specific attention is given to sampling method and the instruments used to measure the variables. Thereafter the statistical techniques applied in the processing of the data are discussed and a general research hypothesis given.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The relationship between two variables is usually measured by means of a correlation analysis. According to McGuigan (1990) a correlation is a statement of a possible relationship between two variables, and it is exemplified by the statement that those variables are *co-related*. The aim of correlational research is thus to measure the relationship between variables that has been observed or measured (Plutchik, 1983).

However, in this study where the two variables each consist of five categories (five sources of power and five conflict handling styles) correlational analysis is not appropriate or adequate. Therefore, the effect and magnitude of each of the independent variable categories (sources of power) have to be measured on each of the dependent variable categories (conflict handling styles). According to Kerlinger (1986) this is known as *multiple regression analysis*, which uses principles of regression and correlation. The purpose of the method is to determine the dependence of conflict handling styles on the sources of power. Hastie and Tibshirani (1990) outline three goals of this method of analysis. They are as follows:

- *Description* - A model is needed to describe the dependence of the response on the predictors so that we can learn more about the process that produces the dependent variable (conflict handling styles).
- *Inference* - It is necessary to assess the relative contributions of each of the predictors (sources of power) in explaining the dependent variable.
- *Prediction* - A researcher wishes to predict the dependent variable for some set of values of the independent variables. According to Kerlinger (1986) the ideal predictive situation is when the correlation between the independent variable categories and the dependent variable are high and the correlations among the independent variable categories are low.

None the less multiple regression analysis has certain analytical and interpretive problems. The main problems are the following:

- The more intercorrelated the independent variables are, the more difficult the interpretation (Kerlinger, 1986). The reason for this is that one has greater difficulty in distinguishing the relative influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

- In any given regression the regression weights will be the same no matter what the order of the variables. If one or more variables are added or subtracted from the regression, these values will change. Regression weights can change from sample to sample. Therefore, there is no absolute quality about them.

Given these limitations multiple correlation remains a powerful statistical method of analysis in the behavioural sciences, particularly where the effect of more than one independent variable on a dependent variable is analysed (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

One could argue that both the variables used in this study have already taken place and that the research is based on historical information. The reason for this is that an individual's perceptions of another individual's behaviour develops over a period of time through a continuous process of social interaction.

The research design is nonexperimental in nature. This was inevitable due to the nature of the variables evaluated and the practical constraints of the study. There were no control groups and the variables were not purposefully manipulated. They were measured in the natural work setting of the respondents.

4.3 RESPONDENTS AND SAMPLING

4.3.1 Respondents

The respondents consisted of individuals, working in the Mining and Engineering departments of an opencast coal mine in the Eastern Transvaal region. The population from which a sample was drawn consisted of 540 employees. A total of 192 respondents completed the questionnaires which represents a response rate of 35 %.

Table 4.1 provides a summary of the biographical information of the respondents.

TABLE 4.1
BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

	FREQUEN CY	%
GENDER		
Male	191	99.5
Female	1	0.5
AGE		
18-25	44	22.9
25-30	79	41.1
31-40	53	27.6
41-older	16	8.3
RACE GROUP		
Indian	1	0.5
Black	58	30.2
Coloured	24	12.5
White	109	56.8
LANGUAGE		
Xhoza	7	3.6
Zulu	31	16.1
Afrikaans	116	60.4
English	12	6.3
Other	26	13.5
QUALIFICATION		
Std 7	1	0.5
Std 8	73	38.0
Std 10	97	50.5
Std 10 + 3 years training	19	9.9
Std 10 + more than 3 years training	2	1.0
DEPARTMENT		
Mining	72	37.5
Engineering	120	62.5
POSITION HELD		
Foreman	14	7.3
Artisan	81	42.2
Operator	74	38.5
Apprentice	23	12.0

The mining industry, especially the technical fields, excluded women for most of the existence of the industry. It is only recently that women could pursue careers in these fields. Most organisations are in a process of transformation to accommodate women and for this reason only one woman participated in this study and completed the questionnaires. However, from a research point of view, this is not representative and no inferences can therefore be made from this one respondent's results.

4.3.2 Sample

A stratified sampling method was used by providing questionnaires to individuals in the mining and engineering departments. A name list of all the individuals working in the two respective departments and the organisational structure were obtained from the personnel department. Discussions with the departmental heads and supervisors followed in order to establish a practical yet scientific way to gather the information. The main practical consideration was to find the most suitable time for the subordinates to complete the questionnaires (during working hours) which would have the least effect on the production process. It was decided that the questionnaires were to be completed in the natural work setting of the individuals before the commencement of every shift. The individuals worked on a three shift system in order to ensure 24 hour continuous production. Every shift was preceded by a safety meeting, which was then extended to accommodate the completion of the questionnaires.

The only prerequisite for individuals to participate in the study was that they were to be able to read and understand Afrikaans or English, because the questionnaires were only available in these two languages. Participation in the study was voluntary and confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed.

4.4 MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENTS

4.4.1 Introduction

Several factors influence the choice of measurement of which *reliability* and *validity* are the most important (Kerlinger, 1986). With this in mind and the constraint of time (time available to respondents to participate in the study) it was decided that *questionnaires* were going to be used to measure each variable. However, the availability of instruments, especially for measuring the independent variable, sources of power, were limited. A number of instruments for measuring conflict handling styles were available. The two instruments chosen for this study were the following:

- Powerbase-Index
- Thomas-Kilmann MODE Instrument (Management-of-Differences)

The fact that a supervisor has the ability to exercise power over others throughout an organisation is very important. Of possibly greater importance to both the organisation and their supervisors are the power relationships which exist between managers and their immediate subordinates. Managers must first obtain co-operation and compliance from their subordinates in order to be effective.

Since subordinates react to the behaviours and attributes of their managers, as they *perceive* them, it seems reasonable to expect that perceived supervisory behaviour will affect their subordinates' perceptions. These perceptions represent the actual or real behaviour of the supervisor (Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1993, p.780). Richmond, Wagner and McCroskey (1983) affirm that it is not the behaviour of the supervisor which impacts the outcome, it is the subordinates' perception of that behaviour. Consequently, the respondents (subordinates) completed the questionnaires in terms of their own perceptions of their supervisors' sources of power and conflict handling behaviour. According to Cosier and Ruble (1981,

p.817) the approach of not having self reports (respondents evaluating their own behaviour) will limit the rater biases, such as social desirability. Social desirability is usually associated with attributional measures such as the ones used in this study (Yukl, 1989).

Subsequently a discussion of the two instruments.

4.4.2 Powerbase-Index

a) *Rationale of the questionnaire*

The questionnaire consists of 22 statements and is designed to measure the following five sources of power (see appendix A):

- *Coercive power* is based on subordinates' perception that a supervisor has the ability to punish them if they fail to conform to his/her influence attempts.
- *Reward power* is based on the perception of subordinates that a supervisor can reward them for desired behaviour.
- *Legitimate power* is based on the belief of subordinates that a supervisor has the right to prescribe and control their behaviour.
- *Expert power* is based on subordinates' belief that a supervisor has job experience and special knowledge or expertise in a given area.
- *Referent power* is based on subordinates' desire to identify or "be like" the supervisor because of their admiration of him/her.

b) Reliability and validity

The reliability coefficients provided by Templer (1980) are depicted in the table below.

TABLE 4.2
RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS OF THE POWERBASE-INDEX

SOURCES OF POWER	RELIABILITY
Coercive power	0,62
Reward power	0,80
Legitimate power	0,66
Expert power	0,82
Referent power	0,73

According to Nunnally (in Womack, 1988, p.327) the above mentioned reliability coefficients can be regarded as moderate to adequate. Nunnally considers 0.80 adequate reliability for basic research and 0.90 the minimum for use in applied settings.

No research testing the validity of the questionnaire could be found. The reasons for selecting the Powerbase-Index questionnaire are as follows:

- The dimensions measured by the questionnaire provides an indication of the dimensions referred to in the general research hypotheses.
- The questionnaire displays moderate to high reliability coefficients on all five sources of power.
- The questionnaire is easy to administer and the completion thereof takes up limited time (approximately 15 minutes).

c) *Administration, scoring and interpretation*

At the start of each session the respondents were welcomed and thanked for their participation. The purpose of the study and general and specific instructions (of each questionnaire) were given before the respondents could proceed (see appendix A for detailed instructions). During most of the sessions there seemed to be an element of haste present. This could probably be ascribed to production pressures, as the mine was behind its set objectives for that specific period.

The Power-Index consists of 22 statements regarding a supervisors' behaviour which are scored on a seven point Likert-type scale. All the statements are phrased positively. Therefore, if a respondent agrees with a statement it implies that his/her supervisor displays that behaviour to the extent that he agrees with the statement. The possible responses were as follows:

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------|
| 1 | = | strongly disagree |
| 2 | = | disagree |
| 3 | = | slightly disagree |
| 4 | = | not sure |
| 5 | = | slightly agree |
| 6 | = | agree |
| 7 | = | strongly agree |

It was pointed out to respondents that they should, as far as possible, avoid choosing the "not sure" option.

The interpretation of the questionnaire is simple. A high score for a statement implies frequent use of that particular source of power.

4.4.3 Thomas-Kilmann Conflict MODE Instrument

a) *Rationale of the questionnaire*

According to Knapp, Putnam and Davis (1988, p.415) most of the instruments for measuring conflict styles were developed in the late 1960's and early 1970's, when the dominant paradigm in social psychology was laboratory testing. Most of these instruments used the five-category scheme for classifying interpersonal conflict handling. Some of the most prominent questionnaires according to Kabanoff (1987, p.160), were the Blake and Mouton questionnaire, developed in 1964; Hall's questionnaire, developed in 1969 and; the Lawrence and Lorsch questionnaire, developed in 1967 and; Rahim's Organisational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II).

Thomas and Kilmann (1975, p.749) indicated that responses to these measures were overwhelmingly influenced by the *social desirability* of the conflict handling modes and their phrasings. Marlow and Crowne (in Rahim and Buntzman, 1988, p.199) defined social desirability as a need for approval and acceptance and the belief that this can be attained by means of culturally acceptable and appropriate behaviours. In response to this Thomas and Kilmann (Kabanoff, 1987, p.160) developed a new conflict measurement instrument - the Management-of-Differences Instrument (MODE). One of the strenghts of the MODE instrument is that it produces scores relatively uncontaminated by social desirability effects (Womack, 1988, p.328).

The questionnaire was designed to measure five interpersonal conflict handling styles. They are as follows:

- *Competing* which is associated with a high level of assertiveness (concern to satisfy own needs) and low level of cooperation (concern to satisfy other's needs).

- *Avoiding* in which supervisors using this style prefer not to engage in conflict. They display a low level of assertiveness and low level of cooperation.
- *Compromising* refers to an intermediate concern for self and others.
- *Accommodating* is associated with a high concern to satisfy other's needs and suppress own needs in order to preserve the relationship.
- *Collaborating* means that conflicting parties engage in a problem solving exercise.

b) Reliability and validity

The reliability coefficients as reported by Kilmann and Thomas (1978, p.1141) are depicted in the following table:

TABLE 4.3
RELIABILITY COEFFICIENTS OF THE THOMAS-KILMANN MODE
INSTRUMENT

CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES	RELIABILITY
Competing	0,61
Avoiding	0,68
Compromising	0,66
Accommodating	0,62
Collaborating	0,63

According to Womack (1988, p.327) the above mentioned reliability coefficients can be considered to be moderate.

Womack (1988, p.329) reported on the findings of various researchers regarding the validity of the MODE instrument. The results indicate moderate validity coefficients. According to Kabanoff (1987, p.162) the predictive validity, i.e. the utility of the instrument as a means of predicting conflict behaviour, is limited. Kabanoff further contends that the instrument fails to discriminate between intended and actual behaviour.

The reasons for choosing the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict MODE instrument are the following:

- The questionnaire displays moderate reliability coefficients, but appears to be more reliable than other conflict measures (Womack, 1988, p.327).
- The questionnaire was developed to reduce social desirability response bias.
- The questionnaire has undergone rigorous scrutiny from researchers over a long period of time (Schneer & Chanin, 1987, p.581).

b) Administration, scoring and interpretation

The Thomas-Kilmann MODE instrument is an ipsative questionnaire consisting of 30 sets of paired items, with each item describing one of the five conflict modes (see appendix B). Each mode (conflict style) is paired with every other mode three times. Therefore, an individual's score for a particular style is determined by the number of times a statement representing that style was chosen. For statistical purposes the "A" and "B" choices were replaced with the numbers "1" and "2".

4.5 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

The primary objective of this study is to determine whether a relationship exists between the sources of power (independent variable) and the conflict handling styles (dependent variable).

In a study of this nature, where the independent variable and the dependent variable each consist of five categories, the relationship is determined by means of multiple regression analysis. Therefore the effect and magnitude of each of the independent variable categories (sources of power) have to be measured on each of the dependent variable categories (conflict handling styles).

The specific statistical technique used to compute the results was *stepwise regression analysis*. Although stepwise regression has certain similarities with multiple regression analysis, it is considered separately, primarily because it differs in its underlying philosophy and because special computer programmes are available for its computation (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). These programmes are designed to select from the group of variables (in this study five categories of one variable) the single variable at each stage that makes the largest contribution to the coefficient of determination, R^2 . Such programmes stop admitting variables into the equation when no variable makes a contribution that is statistically significant at a level specified by the program user.

The coefficient of determination, R^2 , is the square root of the multiple correlation coefficient, R , and is an estimate of the variance of the dependent variable (conflict handling styles) due to, or accounted for, by the independent variables (sources of power). According to Templer (1986) it is more meaningful and useful to use R^2 instead of R .

After the raw data had been captured, the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) was used to compute the results and determine the R^2 values for each variable.

The testing of statistical significance in multiple regression is based on the idea of comparing variances as in analysis of variance, in other words, did R^2 arise by chance? Statistical significance was determined by means of the F-test in order to determine the F-ratio. The probability value of each regression was then determined by means of the Statistical Analysis System. The probability value indicates the level of significance, which must be smaller than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) for any statistical significant differences. The probability value ranges from null (impossible) to one (certainty) and indicates the probability that the relationship between the variables are not by chance.

The results of the statistical analysis will be discussed in the following chapter.

4.6 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of the study is to investigate whether a significant relationship exists between the five sources of power and the five conflict handling styles. Due to the fact that this study is purely a correlational investigation and not an experimental design (comparing different groups in terms of a certain phenomenon) no null and alternative hypothesis will be stated. Instead, a general research hypothesis will be stated as follows:

The five sources of power are significantly related to the five conflict handling styles.

The general research hypothesis will be analysed in more detail when presenting and interpreting the findings.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

A summary of the general results which was obtained by means of the Statistical Analysis System, follows. This will be followed by a discussion of the results in terms of the theory and research on the sources of power and the conflict handling styles. Lastly, the shortcomings of the study and suggestions for future research will be given.

5.2 RESULTS OF THE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, stepwise regression computer programmes are designed to select from a group of variables, the single variable at each stage that makes the largest contribution to the coefficient of determination, R^2 . Such programmes stop admitting variables into the equation when no variable makes a contribution that is statistically significant at a level specified by the program used. In this study the computer program included all the variables making a contribution to R^2 at the $p < 0.5$ level of significance. However, in behavioural research only those variables contributing to R^2 at a significance level of $p < 0.05$ (5%) are usually regarded as significantly related to the dependent variable (McCall, 1990).

The statistics will be discussed in terms of the results in each of the following tables. A table for each of the steps in the regression analysis, and therefore each of the dependent variables, are provided.

5.2.1 Five sources of power and the competing conflict handling style

The first step of the regression analysis programme evaluated the relationship between the sources of power and the *competing* conflict handling style.

TABLE 5.1
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SOURCES OF POWER AND THE
COMPETING CONFLICT HANDLING STYLE

SOURCES OF POWER	R ²	F	P
Reward power	0.036	7.24	0.0077
Expert power	0.008	1.60	0.2062
Legitimate power	0.007	1.39	0.2398

The results in table 5.1 indicate that the variance of the *competing* conflict handling style due to the regression on reward, expert and legitimate power was 0.036, 0.008 and 0.007 respectively. The total variance of the competing conflict handling style accounted for by the sources of power was 0.051 (0.036 + 0.007 + 0.008) or 5%.

However, only the variance due to *reward* power ($R^2 = 0.036$) was statistically significant with an F-ratio of 7.24 ($p = 0.0077$). The probability that this variance could have arisen by chance is less than 1% ($p < 0.01$). An F-ratio of this magnitude indicates that the **between-group variance** was much larger than the **within-group variance**.

Between-group variance reflects the systematic or experimental differences between the variables (Kerlinger, 1986). Within-group variance refers to the variance due to chance or random factors, in other words, fluctuation of measures that cannot be accounted for. Within-group variance is further commonly known as error variance.

Therefore, 3.6% ($R^2 = 0.036 \times 100$) of the variance in the *competing* conflict handling style is significantly accounted for by reward power.

According to Frank (in Smit, 1983, p.222), statistical measures of significance may be misleading in that a statistically significant finding need not be significant in the non technical sense of the term. The discovery of a very weak relationship between variables with high statistical significance indicates that some relationship is present, but it may be so weak as to contribute practically nothing to the understanding of the phenomenon under study.

The question arises whether a variance of 3.6% can be regarded as significant, even though $p = 0.0077$? According to Templer (1986) variances smaller than 1% cannot be regarded too seriously, but variances between 5% and 10% should be regarded as significant, especially with a large sample size.

McCall (1990) contends that the value for R required for significance at 0.05 decreases as the number of subjects in the sample (degrees of freedom) increases. McCall's argument is based on the "Statistical Tables for Biological, Agricultural and Medical Research" developed by Fisher and Yates (McCall, 1990, p.413). In this study, with $N = 192$, a variance of 3.6% can be regarded as statistically significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that reward power is significantly related to the competing conflict handling style.

5.2.2 Five sources of power and the avoiding conflict handling style

In the second step of the regression analysis, the relationship between the five sources of power and the *avoidance* conflict handling style was determined.

TABLE 5.2
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SOURCES OF POWER AND THE AVOIDING CONFLICT HANDLING STYLE

SOURCES OF POWER	R ²	F	P
Reward power	0.027	5.29	0.0225
Expert power	0.004	0.77	0.3794

According to the results in table 5.2, the variance of the *avoidance* conflict handling style due to the regression on reward and expert power was 0.027 and 0.004 respectively. The total variance of the avoidance conflict handling style accounted for by the sources of power was 0.031 (0.027 + 0.004) or 3%.

However, it is only the variance due to *reward power* ($R^2 = 0.027$) that is statistically significant with a F-ratio of 5.29 ($p = 0.0225$). This implies that the systematic variance was larger than the error variance, hence the F-ratio of 5.29. The probability that this variance could have arisen by chance is less than 5% ($p < 0.05$).

Therefore, 2.7% of the variance in the *avoidance* conflict handling style is significantly accounted for by reward power. Based on this information it can be contended that reward power is significantly related to the avoiding conflict handling style.

5.2.3 Five sources of power and the compromising conflict handling style

The third step of the regression analysis, evaluated the relationship between the sources of power and the *compromising* conflict handling style.

TABLE 5.3
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SOURCES OF POWER AND THE
COMPROMISING CONFLICT HANDLING STYLE

SOURCES OF POWER	R^2	F	P
Reward power	0.007	1.40	0.2366
Expert power	0.028	5.58	0.0191

According to the results in table 5.3 the variance of the *compromising* conflict handling style due to the regression on reward and expert power was 0.007 and 0.028 respectively. The total variance of the compromising conflict handling style accounted for by the sources of power was 0.035 (0.007 + 0.028) or 3.5%.

However, it is only the variance due to *expert power* ($R^2 = 0.028$) that was statistically significant with an F-ratio of 5.58 ($p = 0.019$).

Therefore, 2.8% of the variance of the compromising conflict handling style was significantly accounted for by expert power. It can be inferred that expert power is significantly related to the compromising conflict handling style.

5.2.4 Five sources of power and the accommodating conflict handling style

The fourth step of the regression analysis evaluated the relationship between the sources of power and the *accommodating* conflict handling style.

TABLE 5.4
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SOURCES OF POWER AND THE ACCOMMODATING CONFLICT HANDLING STYLE

SOURCES OF POWER	R ²	F	P
Reward power	0.014	2.71	0.1012
Legitimate power	0.014	2.89	0.0905
Coercive power	0.038	2.65	0.1051

The results in table 5.4 indicate that the variance of the *accommodating* conflict handling style due to the regression on reward, legitimate and coercive power was 0.014, 0.014 and 0.038 respectively. The total variance due to the sources of power was 0.066. However, none of the sources of power met the $p < 0.05$ significance level. This implies that the difference between the systematic variance (between group variance) and error variance (within group variance) was very little, hence the small F-ratio's. Therefore, none of the sources of power were significantly related to the accommodating conflict handling style.

5.2.5 Five sources of power and the collaborating conflict handling style

The last step in the multiple regression analysis evaluated the relationship between the sources of power and the *collaborating* conflict handling style.

TABLE 5.5
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SOURCES OF POWER AND THE
COLLABORATING CONFLICT HANDLING STYLE

SOURCES OF POWER	R ²	F	P
Reward power	0.052	1.03	0.3096
Expert power	0.017	3.33	0.0695
Legitimate power	0.022	4.42	0.0368
Referent power	0.005	2.59	0.1089

The results in table 5.5 indicate that the variance of the *collaborating* conflict handling style due to the regression on reward, expert, legitimate and referent power was 0.052, 0.017, 0.022 and 0.005 respectively. The total variance of the collaborating style accounted for by the sources of power was 0.096. However, it was only the variance due to *legitimate power* ($R^2 = 0.022$) that was statistically significant with an F-ratio of 4.42 ($p = 0.0369$).

Therefore, 2% of the variance of the collaborating conflict handling style was significantly accounted for by legitimate power. Legitimate power can be regarded as a significantly related to the collaborating conflict handling style.

In summary, the results indicate that certain sources of power are significantly related at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance, to certain conflict handling styles.

5.3 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.3.1 Introduction

The results are discussed in terms of the five conflict handling styles and the research objective. It should be noted that if the general research hypothesis is supported or rejected it is done so in terms of the results of *this* study, with its particular circumstances, constraints and research methodology employed. Different circumstances, population and methodology may yield different results.

5.3.2 Competing

Reward power was the only source of power found to be significantly related to the competing conflict handling style.

This means that a supervisor who is perceived as using reward power in acquiring compliance from subordinates, will tend to use the competing conflict handling style when dealing with differences of opinions and needs. This does not mean that reward power *causes* a competing conflict handling style, but merely that a relationship between the two variables exist.

Rahim and Buntzman (1988, p.195), in a similar study, found that none of the sources of power were significantly related to the competing conflict handling style.

In trying to find an explanation for the relationship between reward power and the competing conflict handling style, one must refer to the inherent nature of both these variables. Reward power is considered a *positional* source of power; i.e. power conferred to a person due to his/her hierarchical position in the organisation. On the other hand, the competing conflict handling style involves competitive behaviours and the use of power and authority to have one's position accepted (Kozan, 1984, p.787). Therefore, supervisors will use their positional power to resolve

differences. Due to this positional power and the ability to reward subordinates, a supervisor can, according to his own reasoning, force or dominate subordinates to accept his way of doing business and handling differences.

The relationship between reward power and the competing conflict handling style might also be explained in terms of McClelland's "need for power" theory (see paragraph 3.3.5, p.66). It refers to the desire to control others or have influence over others (Plunkett & Attner, 1992). Pierce and Dunham (1990, p.304) described one of the needs of power as *personalised power*, which involves dominating others for the sake of domination. The focus is on the interests of the individual himself and not on the interests of the other individuals or the group.

5.3.3 Avoiding

Reward power was the only source of power found to be significantly related to the avoiding conflict handling style and this supports the findings of previous research in this regard (Rahim & Buntzman, 1988, p.195).

The reason for this relationship can best be described in terms of the Industrial Relations perspective and more specific the Unitary Ideology of conflict handling (see paragraph 2.3.3). Individuals relating to this ideology believe that conflict is considered to be unimportant and unacceptable. The focus is on harmony between management and workers and conflict should be avoided at all costs, as it poses a threat to the well-being of the organisation.

Supervisors ascribing to this ideology must however still get the job done without disrupting the harmony of the organisation, i.e. avoiding conflict. The best way to achieve this is by focusing on the rewards of compliance. That is, telling subordinates that by contributing to goal attainment they will be rewarded.

5.3.4 Compromising

Expert power was the only source of power found to be significantly related to the compromising conflict handling style. These results do not support the research by Rahim and Buntzman (1988, p.204), which indicated that expert power was associated with the use of the competing and avoiding conflict handling styles.

A supervisor has expert power when his skills, knowledge and abilities are needed and respected by others (Fairholm, 1993). This source of power is not based on an individual's position in the organisation, and is therefore often regarded as a personal source of power.

The relationship between expert power and the compromising conflict handling style can partly be explained in terms of the *Resource-dependency* theory referred to in the literature review (see paragraph 3.3.3, p.63). Miceli and Near (1992) propose that the individual's power in the organisation is not necessarily inverse to his dependence on the organisation. They developed a grid depicting four possible resource-dependency relationships. In the fourth cell of the grid (see table 3.1, p.64) are individuals who possess influence because of their expertise (expert power), but they do not have many employment opportunities outside the organisation.

This situation is exceedingly prevalent for supervisors (first level supervision) who are employed in the coal mining industry. They have very little opportunities outside the industry. Therefore, they might be highly influential, because of their expert power, but they are rather dependent. In resolving conflict they will tend to have moderate concern for the other parties' needs (due to their dependence) but will also expect something in exchange (due to their power and hence, the other parties' dependence). This connotes a compromising conflict handling style.

5.3.5 Accommodating

None of the sources of power were found to be significantly related to the accommodating conflict handling style. According to the results of Rahim and Buntzman (1988, p.204), referent power was significantly related with the accommodating conflict handling style.

The accommodating style refers to a high concern for others' needs and a low concern for own needs. According to Rahim (1986) there is an element of self-sacrifice present in this style. This definition of accommodation might in itself explain why none of the sources of power are significantly related to this style. Self-sacrifice does not reflect an individual who possesses power, but rather an individual who is dependant (the inverse of power) of others.

5.3.6 Collaborating

Legitimate power was the only source of power found to be significantly related to the collaborating conflict handling style. These findings are not supported by Rahim and Buntzman (1988, p.204), who indicated that legitimate power was positively correlated with the competing conflict handling style.

The relationship between legitimate power and the collaborating conflict handling style cannot be explained from a theoretical perspective, as no theory supports these findings. Therefore, it is argued that the variance in the collaborating conflict handling style was due to extraneous variables, that is, variables other than the independent variables. Extraneous variables in this study might include the heterogeneity of the sample, the management style of the supervisors, the personality profiles of the supervisors and the subordinates and the organisational culture and values.

5.4 CONCLUSION

In terms of the results the objective of the study was achieved, i.e. it was determined whether a relationship between the five sources of power and the five conflict handling styles exists. Reward power was found to be significantly related to the competing and the avoiding conflict handling styles. Expert power was significantly related to the compromising conflict handling style and legitimate power was significantly related to the collaborating conflict handling style. All the significant relationships reported were low in magnitude with variances ranging from 2% to 4%.

5.5 SHORTCOMINGS OF THE STUDY

The major value of this study is its contribution towards the understanding of the concepts of power and conflict and particularly the sources of power and the conflict handling styles. The research can be used in the implementation of intervention strategies and behaviour modification regarding interpersonal conflict handling behaviour.

However, this study had certain shortcomings which are delineated as follows:

- The sample was too *heterogeneous*. Although the sample was taken from a specific colliery, it consisted of too many different groups, i.e. race, age, language, qualifications, etc. (see table 4.1, p.91). These different variables might have acted as extraneous variables influencing the results.
- French and Ravens' five sources of power taxonomy might be outdated. According to Yukl and Fable (1991, p.421) a sixth source of power, i.e. *information* power should be added to the above taxonomy. Information forms the basis of decision making in any organisation. An individual's

information power would therefore be based on the type of information over which he/she has control and others' dependency on such information.

- Stepwise regression analysis has certain inherent problems. If more independent variables are added to an equation the relative contribution of each variable will change. For example if more independent variables were added, other than just the sources of power, different results would have been obtained. Therefore, the relative contribution of an independent variable will vary with the amount of variables added. A related problem with the free use of stepwise regression is that the ad hoc order produced from a set of variables in one sample is not likely to be found in other samples from the same population.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The fact that power and conflict behaviour are central to organisational dynamics emphasises the importance of research in these areas. The following recommendations are made to improve on this study and to be followed up with further research:

- A more homogeneous sample should be selected to minimize the effect of extraneous variables.
- More research is needed to determine the reliability and validity of the two questionnaires used.
- Information power should be added to the sources of power taxonomy and researched.
- A more comprehensive sources of power questionnaire, which includes information power, should be developed.

- Instead of using questionnaires future researchers could focus on actual behaviour in organisational settings.
- The whole question of whether individuals are able to adapt the use of their sources of power and conflict handling behaviour to different situations needs further investigation.
- The occurrence of the same or different power and conflict handling behaviour towards subordinates, peers and superiors should be researched.
- More research is needed in the field of demonstrative conflict handling for example, regression, verbal aggression and physical aggression.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

6.1 MOTIVATION AND OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Sources of power and conflict handling styles have been part of management literature and organisational dynamics since its existence.

However, no research has been done in South Africa and very little internationally, to investigate the relationship between these two variables. This research was performed to fill the gap and to provide the theoretical background and empirical conclusions necessary to address these disparities.

The primary objective of the study was to investigate whether a significant relationship existed between the five sources of power and the five conflict handling styles of supervisors.

In terms of the objectives of the study the following research question was presented:

"Is there a significant relationship between the five sources of power and the five conflict handling styles of supervisors?"

6.2 THEORETICAL INVESTIGATION

A theoretical overview of the broad concepts of power and conflict were given. Particular attention was then given to the sources of power and conflict handling styles.

6.2.1 Sources of power

The different theories of power evolved over a long period of time, each making unique contributions to the understanding of the phenomenon. The *exchange theory* focuses on the asymmetry of power in relationships when the parties involved exchange resources. The *power dependence theory* is a result of Emerson's research and it emphasises dependencies that occur in power relationships. The *resource dependency theory* evolved from the power dependency theory and highlights the fact that control over resources precipitate dependencies and consequently the emergence of power. According to the *strategic contingencies theory*, entities in organisations who have the ability to control contingencies, adapt to uncertainties and are unsubstitutable are the ones who possess the power.

However, the successful application of power is not a function of knowledge alone, it is a function of the sources of power available. The initial five sources of power as identified by French and Raven (1980) underpinned the study on the sources of power.

- *Coercive power* is based on subordinates' perception that a supervisor has the ability to punish them if they fail to conform to his/her influence attempts.
- *Reward power* is based on the perception of subordinates that a supervisor can reward them for desired behaviour.
- *Legitimate power* is based on the belief of subordinates that a supervisor has the right to prescribe and control their behaviour.
- *Expert power* is based on subordinates' belief that a supervisor has job experience and special knowledge or expertise in a given area.

- *Referent power* is based on subordinates' desire to identify or "be like" the supervisor because of their admiration of him/her.

6.2.2 Conflict handling styles

In order to understand the dynamics of interpersonal conflict handling it was first necessary to examine the broader concept of conflict.

Five main approaches to conflict were identified, namely micro level or psychological, economic, industrial relations, negotiations and third party intervention approaches. These approaches provide a holistic view of the phenomenon within organisations and society as a whole. It was mentioned that three of the approaches, i.e. industrial relations, negotiations and third party intervention, belong to the same paradigm within the context of this study. This study was mainly concerned with micro level perspectives, particularly interpersonal conflict. However, it was important to take note of the other approaches in order to explain the results of the statistical analysis.

Various models of conflict were identified in the literature study. The models were divided into two categories namely, *descriptive* and *normative* models. The descriptive models address the causes and dynamics of conflict and the normative models follow a prescriptive approach with the emphasis on co-operation and mutual problem solving. Of the various models developed the dyadic, two-dimensional model developed by Thomas was of particular significance for the purpose of this study. According to this model conflicting parties either have a high concern for others' needs; a high concern for their own needs or a combination of the two. After much development of the theory, five styles for handling interpersonal conflict were identified. The five styles are as follows:

- *Competing* - This style is associated with a high level of assertiveness (concern to satisfy own needs) and low level of cooperation (concern to

satisfy other's needs). This style has been identified with a win-lose orientation.

- *Avoiding* - Supervisors using this style prefer not to engage in conflict. They display a low level of assertiveness and low level of cooperation. This style has been associated with withdrawing, buckpassing or sidestepping situations.
- *Compromising* refers to intermediate concern for self and others. This style is associated with a "give and take" , or "half a bread is better than no bread" situation. This involves sharing, where both parties give up something to make a mutually acceptable decision.
- *Accommodating* - This style is associated with a high concern to satisfy other's needs and suppress own needs in order to preserve the relationship. This is associated with an attempt to play down the differences and to emphasize the commonalities.
- *Collaborating* - In this style conflicting parties engage in a problem solving exercise. This involves openness, exchange of information and examination of differences to reach an effective solution acceptable to both parties. This is often referred to as a win-win style.

6.3 EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

6.3.1 Respondents

Respondents were chosen from a specific opencast colliery situated in the Eastern Transvaal. All of the respondents were employed in the Engineering and Mining departments of the organisation. This was also the only prerequisite for the respondents to be able to participate in the study. A total of 192 respondents completed the questionnaires, which represents a response rate of 35%.

6.3.2 Instruments

The Powerbase-Index and the Thomas-Kilman MODE instruments were used to measure the two sets of variables. These questionnaires were chosen due to their reasonable reliability displayed in previous research.

6.3.3 Research design and statistical methods

A multiple regression design was followed. Questionnaires were handed to the respondents, which were, after completion, processed by means of the Statistical Analysis System (SAS). SAS was used to calculate the "Coefficient of determination", R^2 , and F-ratio's, to determine whether the five sources of power were significantly related to the five conflict handling styles.

6.3.4 General research hypothesis

The research design of this study was not experimental in nature, i.e. comparing groups with each other. It was an empirical investigation to determine whether a significant relationship existed between two sets of variables. Therefore, instead of having a null and alternative hypothesis, a general research hypothesis was formulated. The general research hypothesis was stated as follows:

"A significant relationship exists between the five sources of power and the five conflict handling styles."

6.4 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results of the empirical investigation are summarised in the following table.

TABLE 6.1
A SUMMARY OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SOURCES OF POWER
AND CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOURCES OF POWER AND CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES		CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES			
		Compe- ting	Avoiding	Compro- mising	Collabo- rating
		R ²	R ²	R ²	R ²
SOURCES OF POWER	Reward	0.036	0.027	-	-
	Expert	-	-	0.028	-
	Legiti- mate	-	-	-	0.022

The variances of 3.6% and 2.7% in the competing and avoiding conflict handling styles were accounted for by reward power. Reward power was significantly related to these two conflict handling styles at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

The variance of 2.8% in the compromising conflict handling style was significantly accounted for by expert power at the $p < 0.05$ level of significance.

The variance of 2.2% in the collaborating conflict handling style was significantly accounted for by legitimate power.

6.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The primary objective of this study, i.e to determine whether a significant relationship between the sources of power and conflict handling styles existed, was achieved. One of the main shortcomings of the study was the heterogeneity of the sample. However, this shortcoming does not negate the value of the study as it provides valuable information regarding the theory and practice of sources of power and conflict handling styles for future research purposes.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The fact that power and conflict behaviour are central to organisational dynamics stresses the importance of research in these areas. The following recommendations are made for future research:

- A more homogeneous sample should be selected to minimize the effect of extraneous variables impacting on the study.
- Information power should be added to the sources of power taxonomy.
- A more comprehensive sources of power questionnaire which includes information power, should be developed.
- Instead of using questionnaires, future researchers could focus on actual behaviour in organisational settings.
- The question of whether individuals are able to adapt the use of their sources of power and conflict handling behaviour to different situations needs further investigation.
- The occurrence of the same or different power and conflict handling behaviour towards subordinates, peers and superiors could be researched.

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APPENDIX A

VRAELYS 1 / QUESTIONNAIRE 1

Hierdie vraelys stel vrae oor jou onmiddelike toesighouer. Dit is die persoon aan wie jy direk rapporteer. Dit is ook die persoon wat jou werk evalueer en nuwe werk vir jou gee om te doen. Ingesluit verskyn 'n lys van woorde en sinne wat jou toesighouer beskryf, sy optrede, dinge wat hy doen en sekere gevoelens wat jy oor hom mag hê.

This questionnaire asks about your immediate supervisor. Your supervisor is the individual that you report to directly. He may also evaluate your work, and give you new work to do. Set out below is a list of words and phrases which try to show what your supervisor may be like, things that he might do and personal feelings that you might have about him.

Dui aan in watter mate jy saamstem /nie saamstem nie, met die volgende stellings deur 'n kruisie te trek deur die nommer op die skaal (wat jy dink jou toesighouer die beste beskryf).

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with these items about your supervisor by putting a cross through the number on the scale that you think best matches your supervisor.

DIE SKAALINDELING IS AS VOLG / THE SCALE IS AS FOLLOWS:

- 1 = Stem beslis nie saam nie / *Strongly disagree*
- 2 = Stem nie saam nie / *Disagree*
- 3 = Stem gedeeltelik nie saam / *Slightly disagree*
- 4 = Onseker / *Not sure*
- 5 = Stem gedeeltelik saam / *Slightly agree*
- 6 = Stem saam / *Agree*
- 7 = Stem beslis saam / *Strongly agree*

Probeer sover moontlik die "onseker" telling vermy/
Where possible try to avoid the "not sure" score

MY TOESIGHOUER / MY SUPERVISOR:.....

- | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Is iemand wat ek bewonder/
<i>Is somebody I admire</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 2. | Gee erkenning wanneer nodig/
<i>Gives praise where praise is due</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 3. | Bestuur deur dwang te gebruik/
<i>Rules by might (supervises by force)</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4. | Is 'n kenner van sy werk/
<i>Is an expert on the job</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 5. | Weet baie/
<i>Knows a great deal</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 6. | Is iemand soos wie ek graag wil wees/
<i>Is somebody I would want to be like</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 7. | Is iemand wie se opdragte ek voel
ek moet gehoorsaam/
<i>Is somebody whose orders I feel I
must obey</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8. | Is ervare/
<i>Is experienced</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 9. | Is iemand vir wie ek as persoon
respek het/
<i>Is somebody I respect as a person</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 10. | Is 'n deskundige van sy werk/
<i>Is proficient (that means an expert
at the job)</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 11. | Is vinnig om te straf/
<i>Is quick to punish</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 12. | Weet wanneer goeie werk gelewer is/
<i>Recognises when a good job is done</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 13. | Is gewillig om ander te bevorder/
<i>Is willing to promote others</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

MY TOESIGHOUER / MY SUPERVISOR:..... (vervolg/continues)

- | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14. | Is iemand na wie ek verplig voel om
te luister/
<i>Is somebody I feel it is my duty
to obey</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 15. | Is iemand wat die reg het om
gehoorsaam te word/
<i>Is somebody who has the right to
be obeyed</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 16. | Vergoed goeie werk/
<i>Rewards good work</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 17. | Soek altyd vir foute/
<i>Is always looking for faults</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 18. | Is vriendelik/
<i>Is friendly</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 19. | Het die reg om my werksaktiwiteite
te reël (rigting aangee)/
<i>Has the right to direct my actions
on the job</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 20. | Het die mag ontvang om opdragte
te gee/
<i>Has been given the power to command</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 21. | Plaas baie klem op dissipline/
<i>Has a strong emphasis on discipline</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 22. | Vergoed my omdat ek doen wat hy vereis
<i>Rewards me for doing what he requires</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 23. | Is 'n aangename persoon/
<i>Is likeable</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

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APPENDIX B

VRAELYS 2 / QUESTIONNAIRE 2

INSTRUKSIES / INSTRUCTIONS

Alle instruksies en vrae sal eers in Afrikaans en dan in Engels gegee word.

All the instructions and questions will first be given in Afrikaans and then in English.

1. Dink aan situasies waar jou toesighouer se opinie verskil van die opinie van ander. Hoe hanteer hy gewoonlik sulke situasies?

Consider situations in which you find your supervisor's opinion differs from others' opinions. How does he usually respond to such situations?

2. Op die volgende bladsye verskyn daar pare stellings wat moontlike optredes voorstel. Omkring asseblief vir elke paar die "A" of "B" stelling wat sy gedrag die beste beskryf.

On the following pages are several pairs of statements describing possible behavioral responses. For each pair, please circle the "A" or "B" statement which is most characteristic of his behaviour.

Let wel - In baie van die gevalle kan dit gebeur dat nie óf "A" óf "B" sy gedrag goed beskryf nie; kies dan die een wat hy die mees waarskynlikste sal toepas.

Please note - In many cases, neither the "A" or "B" statements may be very typical of his behavior; but select the response which he would be more likely to use.

1. A. Dit gebeur soms dat hy aan ander persone die verantwoordelikheid gee om probleme op te los./
There are times when he lets others take responsibility for solving the problem.
 - B. In plaas daarvan dat hy onderhandel oor die dinge waaroor ons verskil, beklemtoon hy eerder die dinge waaroor ons saamstem./
Rather than to negotiate the things on which we disagree, he tries to stress those things upon which we both agree.

2. A. Hy poog om 'n kompromie (gee en neem) oplossing te vind./
He tries to find a compromise (give and take) solution.
 - B. Hy poog om al my en sy bekommernisse te hanteer./
He attempts to deal with all of his and my concerns.

3. A. Hy is gewoonlik ferm daaroor om sy doelwitte te bereik./
He is usually firm in pursuing his goals.
 - B. Hy sal poog om my tevrede te stel sodat ons verhouding behoue bly./
He might try to soothe the my feelings to preserve our relationship.

4. A. Hy poog om 'n kompromie oplossing te vind./
He tries to find a compromise solution.
 - B. Hy sal somtyds sy eie begeertes opoffer ten einde my (of ander) se begeertes te bevredig./
He sometimes sacrifices his own wishes for the wishes of the other person.

5. A. Hy soek gereeld ander se hulp om probleme op te los./
He consistently seeks the other's help in working out solutions.
 - B. Hy doen wat nodig is om onnodige spanning te voorkom./
He tries to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.

6. A. Hy vermy die skep van onaangenaamhede vir homself./
He tries to avoid creating unpleasantness for himself.
 - B. Hy poog om sy standpunt te laat geld /
He tries to win his position.

7. A. Hy poog om die kwessie uit te stel totdat hy tyd gehad het om daardoor te dink./
He tries to postpone the issue until he has had some time to think it over.

 B. Hy gee sommige punte prys in ruil vir ander./
He gives up some points in exchange for others.
8. A. Hy is gewoonlik ferm daardoor om sy doelwitte te bereik./
He is usually firm in pursuing his goals.

 B. Hy poog om alle besorgdhede en kwessies dadelik na vore te bring./
He attempts to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
9. A. Hy voel dit is onnodig om altyd oor verskille besorgd te wees./
He feels that differences are not always worth worrying about.

 B. Hy wend 'n poging aan om dinge volgens sy manier te doen./
He makes some effort to get his way.
10. A. Hy is ferm daardoor om sy doelwitte te bereik./
He is firm in pursuing his goals.

 B. Hy poog om 'n kompromie oplossing te vind./
He tries to find a compromise solution.
11. A. Hy poog om alle besorgdhede en kwessies dadelik na vore te bring./
He attempts to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.

 B. Hy sal poog om my tevrede te stel sodat ons verhouding behoue bly./
He might try to soothe the my feelings to preserve our relationship.
12. A. Hy vermy soms situasies waar dit twis kan veroorsaak.
He sometimes avoids taking positions which would create controversy.

 B. Hy sal sommige toegewings maak indien hy sekere toegewings kan kry./
He will let me have some of my positions if I let him have some of his.

13. A. Hy stel 'n goue-middeweg voor./
He proposes a middle ground.
- B. Hy dring aan op sy standpunte./
He presses to get his points made.
14. A. Hy vertel jou van sy idees en vra jou dan vir joune./
He tells you his ideas and asks you for your ideas.
- B. Hy poog om jou die logika en voordele van sy idees te vertel./
He tries to show you the logic and benefits of his position.
15. A. Hy sal poog om my tevrede te stel sodat ons verhouding behoue bly./
He might try to soothe the my feelings to preserve our relationship.
- B. Hy doen wat nodig is om onnodige spanning te voorkom./
He tries to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.
16. A. Hy poog om nie ander se gevoelens seer te maak nie./
He tries not to hurt the others' feelings.
- B. Hy poog om ander te oortuig van die meriete van sy saak./
He tries to convince the other person of the merits of his position.
17. A. Hy is gewoonlik ferm daaroor om sy doelwitte te bereik./
He is usually firm in pursuing his goals.
- B. Hy doen wat nodig is om onnodige spanning te voorkom./
He tries to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.
18. A. Hy sal 'n ander persoon sy sin laat kry indien dit die ander persoon gelukkig maak./
If it makes the other person happy, he might let him maintain his views.
- B. Hy sal sommige toegewings maak indien hy sekere toegewings kan kry./
He will let me have some of my positions if I let him have some of his.

19. A. Hy poog om alle besorgdhede en kwessies dadelik na vore te bring./
He attempts to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
- B. Hy poog om die kwessie uit te stel totdat hy tyd gehad het om daaroor te dink./
He tries to postpone the issue until he has had some time to think it over.
20. A. Hy poog om verskille wat tussen ons bestaan dadelik uit te klaar./
He attempts to immediately work through our differences.
- B. Hy poog om 'n billike kombinasie van wen en verloor vir beide van ons te kry./
He tries to find a fair combination of gains and losses for both of us.
21. A. Wanneer hy in onderhandelinge ingaan, probeer hy die ander persoon se wense in ag neem./
In approaching negotiations, he tries to be considerate of the other persons wishes.
- B. Hy poog altyd om 'n probleem direk te bespreek./
He always leans towards a direct discussion of the problem.
22. A. Hy probeer altyd om 'n standpunt in te neem wat tussen myne en syne is./
He always tries to find a position that is intermediate between his and mine.
- B. Hy is selfgeldend oor sy wense.
He asserts his wishes.
23. A. Hy poog dikwels om aan almal se wense te voldoen.
He is very often concerned with satisfying all our wishes.
- B. Dit gebeur soms dat hy aan ander persone die verantwoordelikheid gee om probleme op te los./
There are times when he lets others take responsibility for solving the problem.

24. A. Indien die ander persoon se posisie vir hom belangrik is, sal hy poog om aan daardie persoon se wense te voldoen.
If the other's position seems very important to him, he would try to meet their wishes.
- B. Hy poog om ander te kry om te kompromieer./
He tries to get them to settle for a compromise.
25. A. Hy poog om jou die logika en voordele van sy idees te vertel./
He tries to show you the logic and benefits of his position.
- B. Wanneer hy in onderhandelinge ingaan, probeer hy die ander persoon se wense in ag neem./
In approaching negotiations, he tries to be considerate of the other persons wishes.
26. A. Hy stel 'n goue-middeweg voor./
He proposes a middle ground.
- B. Hy poog byna altyd om die ander partye se wense te bevredig./
He is nearly always concerned with satisfying all our wishes.
27. A. Hy vermy soms situasies waar dit twis kan veroorsaak.
He sometimes avoids taking positions which would create controversy.
- B. Hy sal 'n ander persoon sy sin laat kry indien dit die ander persoon gelukkig sal maak./
If it makes the other person happy, he might let him maintain his views.
28. A. Hy is gewoonlik ferm daaroor om sy doelwitte te bereik./
He is usually firm in pursuing his goals.
- B. Hy soek gewoonlik ander se hulp om probleme op te los./
He usually seeks the other's help in working out solutions.
29. A. Hy stel 'n goue-middeweg voor./
He proposes a middle ground.
- B. Hy voel dit is onnodig om altyd oor verskille besorgd te wees./
He feels that differences are not always worth worrying about.

30. A. Hy poog om nie ander se gevoelens seer te maak nie./
He tries not to hurt the others' feelings.
- B. Hy deel altyd die probleem met die ander persoon sodat hulle 'n oplossing kan vind./
He always shares the problem with the other person so that they can work it out.

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